DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 423 569 CS 509 913

TITLE	Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (81st, Baltimore, Maryland, August 5-8, 1998). Media Management and Economics; Magazine.
INSTITUTION	Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.
PUB DATE	1998-08-00
NOTE	356p.; For other sections of these Proceedings, see CS 509 905-922.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Proceedings (021) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC15 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Broadcast Industry; Elections; Family (Sociological Unit); Females; *Journalism; Laws; Mass Media Role; *Mass Media Use; *Newspapers; *Periodicals; Programming (Broadcast); Sexual Harassment; *Television
IDENTIFIERS	Cellular Telephones; *Media Management; Popular Magazines; Womens Magazines

ABSTRACT

The Media Management and Economics--Magazine section of the Proceedings contains the following 12 papers: "Not the Same Story: Differences in Sexual Harassment of Women Who Work in Newspaper and Television Newsrooms" (Lori Bergen); "Modeling Strategy for Mass Media: A Resource-Based Approach" (Hugh J. Martin); "The Impact of the Expansion in the Aftermarket on Network Prime Time Programs" (Sora K. Park); "Creative Ownership Transition Strategies for Community Newspapers" (Dane Claussen); "The Representation of Financial Institutions on the Boards of Directors of Publicly-Traded Newspaper Companies" (Soontae An and Hyun Seung Jin); "Parent Company Influence on Local Market Competition in Cellular Telephone" (Hugh S. Fullerton); "A New Entry in the Television Broadcasting Industry and Program Diversity: The Case of the Emergence of SBS-TV in Korea" (Myung-Hyun Kang); "Family Pictures: Constructing the Typical American in 1920s Magazines" (Carolyn Kitch); "Reviewing the Record: What Magazine Letters to the Editor Said About Journalism in 1962, 1972, 1982, and 1992" (Brian Thornton); "The Astounding Women of 'Analog': A Content Analysis of Cover Art, 1930-1995" (Lisa M. Daigle); "Women's Magazines Used Agenda-Setting, Priming in Effort to Influence '96 Election" (Ernest C. Hynds); and "Beauty and Fashion Magazine Reading and Anorectic Cognitions as Predictors of Dieting Behavior in College-Age Women" (Steven R. Thomsen, Robert L. Gustafson, J. Kelly McCoy, and Marleen Williams). (CR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 423 569

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION (81st, Baltimore, MD, August 5-8, 1998). MEDIA MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS; MAGAZINE.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
J. McGill
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

CS509513

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Not the Same Story: Differences in Sexual Harassment of Women Who Work in Newspaper and Television Newsrooms

by

Lori Bergen

Assistant Professor
A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications
105 Kedzie Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506-1501
office: (785) 532-2369
fax: (785) 532-5484
e-mail: <lbergen@ksu.edu>

Presented to the Media Management and Economics Division
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
Annual Convention
Baltimore, Maryland, August 1998

ABSTRACT

Not the Same Story: Differences in Sexual Harassment of Women Who Work in Newspaper and Television Newsrooms

by Lori Bergen

This study examines the peculiar working conditions that many female journalists in television stations and newspaper newsrooms find themselves in. Sexual harassment of newspaper journalists is most likely to be committed by people outside the newsroom: by news sources. But television journalists are more likely to endure harassment perpetrated by their co-workers. This is a replication of a national study of newspaper women in which we report findings from TV journalists as well.

Bergen is Assistant Professor in the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications, 105 Kedzie Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506-1501, office: (785) 532-2369, fax: (785) 532-5484, e-mail: <lbergen@ksu.edu>

Paper presented to the Media Management and Economics Division
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
Annual Convention
Baltimore, Maryland, August 1998

Introduction

This study examines the peculiar working conditions many female journalists find themselves in, which can make the persistent problem of sexual harassment difficult to control, much less stop. Yet the culture defines the problem, and seeks remedies for it, in part, from research that assumes institutional parameters that have very little resemblance to the conditions within which female journalists work. More specifically, most studies examine a venue that is enclosed spatially, has distinct temporal boundaries (i.e., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.), and more or less presents the same cast of characters -- the employee base -- over an extended period of time under varying degrees of professional pressure. Within this environment originates the predicate for what most of us think of as sexual harassment.

The female American journalist, on the other hand, lives in a different world. From a national study conducted previously, we know that the nature of sexual harassment in newspapers, for instance, is typically non-physical[1] (as opposed to the physical nature of harassment identified in other workplaces, such as the military[2]), and that harassment is most likely to be committed by people outside the office: by news sources, not by a female journalist's co-workers. Moreover, newspaper journalists do not work 9-to-5 jobs, but jobs that often have no *de facto* defined working hours.

The nature of the job difference between that of journalists and other American workers is even noted in the way the laws are written that mediate harassment. The law finds employers liable for sexual harassment by non-employees only if the employer has the ability to stop the improper behavior.[3] Otherwise, most sex harassment laws govern the traditional venue of defined space, set hours, and a well-defined employee base.

Because journalists operate outside the boundaries of the typical organization to conduct much of their work, the nature of the journalistic role is what organizational theorists refer to as the "boundary spanning role." This means that they frequently leave the real confines of their organizations to conduct their business.[4] Reporters and photographers leave their offices and the protection of their organizations' sexual harassment policies behind and enter the public environments of the streets when they cover crime stories and spot news, or the private environments of people's homes and offices when those people are intentionally or inadvertently thrust into the public eye because of their centrality to news events. Policies that govern the behaviors of employees with regard to sexual harassment obviously no longer apply when only one party is an employee, and the other is a news source.

Complicating this further is the nature of the relationship between journalists and sources--a power relationship which frequently, although not always, reflects a balance of power in which the source holds the upper hand. That is, the source controls access to the information that a journalists seeks to do his or her job well. Reluctant--and even recalcitrant--sources are not a rarity. And most journalists are aware that part of the exchange between information seekers and reluctant information providers is often resistance, obfuscation, or worse. Since the underlying motivation for sexual harassment is often not sexual desire, but a power-play, it may be no suprise that a source would use one more method at his disposal if the gender orientations line up (male source, female journalist).

Women journalists are uniquely positioned to be particularly vulnerable to circumstances and situations conducive to sexual harassment, so the nature of sexual harassment in these instances requires our scrutiny. We are particularly interested in examining this phenomenon that holds the potential to erode the quality of the work environment for women, because women's presence in the newsroom is a significant contributor to the diversity of both work environments and the resulting content produced. [5]

Because replication can contribute to the validity of findings from an original investigation, we modeled our study after the nation-wide study of women newspaper journalists conducted by Walsh-Childers, Chance and Herzog two years earlier.[6]

We also wanted to move beyond the individual level of analysis by conducting this replication with women who work in similar, yet different organizational settings. We included respondents from the newsrooms of daily newspapers and from local television stations in one Midwestern state to allow us to examine differences that might be grounded in the constraints and routines of different kinds of media organizations.

As mass communication scholars, our ultimate focus in studying the media is on content in one way or another--its characteristics, its creation or its impact. Many content studies are concerned with effects, and a growing body of research has focused on the sociology of the production of messages.[7] We locate our study in this theoretical landscape at the point of the framework where effects and influences on the production of media content are considered. Although we do not address the issue of content at all in this study, our interest is on influences operating inside of media organizations that do affect media content, including organizational constraints and the routines of newsgathering.

Our survey instrument followed the format used in the national newspaper study we replicated, and our research questions were modeled on those that directed the previous study, but with the added intent of determining whether journalists employed in different kinds of media organizations would experience sexual harassment in different ways and under different conditions. In addition, we were interested in determining whether women journalists who cover the news in the state of Kansas were any more or less affected by sexual harassment in their work than journalists in the national sample. Thus, we were particularly interested in addressing the following research questions:

1. Are the percentages of women in Kansas newspaper and television newsrooms who have experienced sexual harassment during their careers, or believe it is a problem for other women in their profession, any different from the national sample of women newspaper journalists?

2. Are there differences in the incidences of sexual harassment as experienced by newspaper women and television women who work as journalists?

3. What is the nature of the sexual harassment that newspaper and television women journalists may have experienced in their careers, and how have they and their news organizations handled these situations if and when they occurred?

4. What behaviors do women journalists identify as constituting sexual harassment? And do journalists from newspaper and television newsrooms agree or differ on these definitions?

Methodology of the Empirical Study

The population for this study consisted of women journalists employed by daily newspapers of at least 10,000 circulation and television stations with local news programs serving the state of Kansas.[8] The researchers compiled a list of all newspapers meeting these criteria from Bacon's media guide[9] and contacted newsroom managers at each location to provide lists of female reporters, editors, photographers and graphic artists on newspaper staff. Reporters, anchors, producers, editors, videographers and news directors at local network affiliates in Topeka, Wichita and Kansas City were also identified. In all, 10 newspapers and nine television stations were contacted. A list of 231 journalists was compiled through this process, and surveys were distributed during the month of March 1997 to all women included on the list . One hundred and three surveys were returned for a response rate of 45%.

The data from the surveys were analyzed using SYSTAT 7.0.

Because this study was a replication of a national study, we used the same measures and response options to operationally define the concepts and variables of interest in our survey of Kansas journalists. Although the original study was conducted by telephone interview, our mailed survey included the following measures:

Evaluation of Sexual Harassment as a Problem. Respondents were asked to indicate whether sexual harassment, defined as *"any physical or verbal contacts that make the workplace inhospitable for women because of their gender,"* was a problem for women journalists in their profession and for them specifically.[10] Because we contacted journalists from both newspaper and television stations, two versions of these questions were used, specific to the media organizations. For both, we used a 5-point scale, with response options of: *"no problem at all, not much of a problem, somewhat of a problem, a significant problem,* or *a very serious problem."* The questions were worded as follows:

For television journalists: *"In your opinion, how much of a problem is sexual harassment for women as television station reporters, anchors, producers, editors and videographers?"* and *"In your own career as a TV reporter, anchor, producer, editor or videographer, how much of a problem has sexual harassment been for you personally?"*

For newspaper journalists: the questions' wording was changed to reflect the different job descriptions: *"newspaper reporters, editors, photographers, or graphic artists."*

Experience with Sexual Harassment. Each respondent was asked to indicate on a 5-point scale (with response options of: *never, rarely, sometimes, often,* and *nearly always or always*) how often she had been *"subjected to sexual harassment that did not involve physical contact, such as inappropriate sexual comments, suggestions, or gestures"* made to her or in her presence. A second question asked how often she had been *"subjected to physical sexual harassment (unwanted physical contact)."* For each of these two questions, four categories of individual potential sources of harassment were listed. These were: *"supervisors or others in positions of authority at your newspaper/television station; other co-workers at your same level; other co-workers at levels lower than yours,* and *news sources or employees of news sources."*

Definitions of Sexual Harassment. We asked respondents to indicate how strongly they agreed with statements about behaviors that might constitute sexual harassment. Respondents indicated their agreement on a 5-point scale (*strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree* or *strongly disagree*) with the following statements:

It is sexual harassment when a man. . .

* *frequently makes uninvited and unnecessary physical contact with a woman who works with him*

* *tells jokes to a woman co-worker who has never told the same kind of joke to him*

* *makes uninvited remarks that have sexual references or double meanings to a woman who works with him*

* *flirts with a woman who has not flirted with him before*

* *displays sexually-oriented pictures or calendars in places where women also work.*

Organizational Policies about Sexual Harassment. We asked respondents if their employers had a written policy statement dealing with sexual harassment, and whether women or men were more likely to be aware of such a policy, or if both are equally aware.

Demographic and Organizational Information. Respondents were asked to provide year of birth, marital status, job title, the number of years employed as a journalist, the number of employees in the current newsroom where she works, what percentage of those are women, and whether her main supervisor is a man, woman or one or more of each.

Near the end of the survey, we also asked a series of open-ended questions that revisited several of the above issues, including a question about the respondent's personal experience of sexual harassment, how complaints about sexual harassment are handled in her newspaper or television station, how instances of sexual harassment involving news sources are dealt with, and how management has responded to complaints or requests for changes in the workplace because of sexual harassment.

Results

Of the 103 women who responded to this study, 53 respondents were newspaper journalists and 50 were from television stations. The largest number of respondents were newspaper reporters (n=35), followed by television station anchors (n=18). The remainder of the newspaper respondents were editors (n=12), and photographers (n=6). Of the television journalists, 11 were reporters, 10 were producers, 9 were editors and 2 were videographers.

Table 1 reviews the demographic characteristics of the sample for this study, including age; years of journalistic experience; number of newsroom employees; percent of newsroom employees who are women; whether the respondent's immediate supervisor was male, female or both; and the respondent's marital status. Also included in this table are total means and percentages from the Walsh-Childers, Chance and Herzog study on these same variables for comparative purposes. Although we were not able to test for significance, these numbers indicate no significant demographic or newsroom environment differences between the national data and the state-wide data gathered in this study. "

Evaluating the Problem of Sexual Harassment. Table 2 provides results of respondents' descriptions of sexual harassment both as a problem for women in their field, or in their own careers. Respondents were first asked to tell us how much of a problem sexual harassment is for women in their own fields (*no problem at all, not much of a problem, somewhat of a problem, a significant problem,* or *a very serious problem*). There was no difference here between newspaper and television journalists. A total of 43.7% of the Kansas journalists reported that sexual harassment is at least *"somewhat of a problem,"* but none indicated it was a very serious problem for women working in their field. These results are also consistent with the results of the previous national study of newspaper journalists.

The second question asked the respondent about the problem of sexual harassment in her own career. Again, the state-wide results from our survey mirror those from the national study, and there was little difference between the newspaper and television journalists' opinions. Of those responding to the Kansas survey, about 20% said sexual harassment had been *"no problem at all"* in their careers. While just over half said it was *"not much of a problem,"* about 27% said it was at least *"somewhat of a problem"* in their careers as newspaper or television journalists.

With regard to the first research question, we concluded that Kansas women newspaper and television journalists are no different from their colleagues in the rest of the country in their opinions about the prevalence of sexual harassment as a problem in their profession, nor do they differ in the incidence of experiencing sexual harassment in their own careers.

Media Industry Differences in Experiences with Sexual Harassment. We asked respondents to indicate how frequently they had been subjected to physical and non-physical sexual harassment by several potential sources of harassment. The results of those responses appear in Tables 3 and 4. We have included results in these two tables from the national study parenthetically below our results, and once again we find there are similar patterns to the frequency of sexual harassment reported by both samples. Considered together, Tables 3 and 4 indicate that journalists in Kansas are far more likely to report experiences of non-physical sexual harassment than harassment of any physical nature, as were the newspaper journalists in the national study.

Table 3 provides frequencies of non-physical sexual harassment, which were defined as inappropriate sexual comments, suggestions, or gestures directed toward the respondent or made in her presence. Our results indicate that over half of the respondents (54.9%) said they had *"never"* experienced any non-physical sexual harassment from a supervisor, about one quarter (24.5%) said such harassment happens *"rarely,"* and about one fifth (20.6%) reported non-physical sexual harassment from a supervisor at least sometimes (includes combined options for responses: *sometimes, often*, and *nearly always or always*). This distribution pattern is reflected in the respondents' assessments of the frequency of harassment from subordinates, with a somewhat greater frequency of harassment from co-workers and news sources.

Table 4 presents the results for physical sexual harassment, and is a clear indicator that very little unwanted physical contact is made toward women journalists by any of the possible sources of harassment. At least three-quarters of all respondents said they were never subjected to unwanted physical contact from supervisors (85.3%), same-level co-workers (75.7%), subordinates (82.5%) or news sources and their employees (74.8%). Again, considering Tables 3 and 4 together gives us a clear picture that sexual harassment perpetrated against women journalists in Kansas newspapers and television stations is almost always non-physical in nature.

The second part of our overall research question inquired as to the differences that might obtain between journalists employed by different media organizations--television and newspapers. We conducted a series of cross tabulations to determine if there were any notable differences in our own data set in the nature of sexual harassment (physical or non-physical) experienced by TV versus newspaper women, or of the perpetrators of harassment (supervisors, co-workers, subordinates, news sources), if and when sexual harassment might occur.

Results from the series of eight cross tabulations were all non-significant, with the exception of two: significant differences existed in the incidence of non-physical sexual harassment by sources and same-level co-workers when cross tabulated with the media organization where the journalist was employed. These results are illustrated in Tables 5 and 6.

Women employed by television stations serving the state of Kansas were significantly more likely to experience non-physical sexual harassment from a *same-level co-worker* than their counterparts employed by Kansas daily newspapers. Table 5 illustrates that 38% of television journalists reported experiencing the kind of sexual harassment defined as inappropriate sexual comments, suggestions and gestures either directed at her or made in her presence at least sometimes; yet only 24.5% of newspaper journalists reported the same. Table 6 presents the second notable finding--that Kansas newspaper women journalists are significantly more likely than their counterparts in local television stations to be subjected to non-physical sexual harassment by *news sources.*

Responses to the Open-Ended Questions about Sexual Harassment from Sources. Respondents gave detailed examples of incidents of sexual harassment that they had experienced personally in response to our open-ended questions . Included were comments about harassment perpetrated both by sources and co-workers.

Some of these comments illustrate the kinds of harassment perpetrated by news sources. In response to our question, *"while working for a newspaper/television station, have you personally ever experienced sexual harassment?"* several responses mirrored those of a newspaper reporter, with a decade of professional experience: "Yes, but not in the office. I have experienced harassment from sources often, particularly police officers [and] attorneys, in the form of suggestive remarks and unwanted touching." Another newspaper reporter of 12 years said: "Only from news sources who would touch me or make inappropriate sexual comments in an attempt to shock or intimidate. This is very common when dealing with law enforcement."

Our respondents cited several examples of sexual harassment perpetrated by news sources who are police or law enforcement officials. Another newspaper reporter wrote: "[I've] not [experienced sexual harassment] at the office, but some police officers I have interviewed have made crude remarks in my presence or asked me out continuously. The only problems I've had were with sources out of the control of my newspaper's management."

A veteran newspaper reporter wrote, "the mayor of the city government I once covered asked a male reporter if I was 'a good f - - -.' I also weathered numerous inappropriate comments while covering the police beat. My problems have been with sources, not co-workers." Another newspaper reporter wrote, "at another small Kansas paper, I was interviewing a school district official when he reached out and touched my breast. I glared at him, and he stopped. We had been talking only about the budget. He moved out of state a few months later."

Yet another newspaper reporter wrote that "a source asked me if he could lick my feet." Another wrote that "a county commissioner grabbed my behind."

Other examples of source-based sexual harassment included a comment from a newspaper sportswriter who said, "the harassment did not take place at the paper . . . athletes have made lewd comments, and other members of sports media have done the same. Nothing major, but they did make for uncomfortable situations."

That sentiment -- that "nothing major" has occurred when such incidents of sexual harassment take place -- suggests the coping strategy that many of our respondents offered: they handle the problems without formal complaints, and they handle these situations themselves.

We asked our respondents how these instances of sexual harassment involving news sources are dealt with, and received comments like these: "Reporters generally handle such problems on their own. If it exacerbates, the reporter can switch beats or ask an editor to intervene."A newspaper photographer wrote: "Remarks have been made, not by people in the workplace, but by the subjects I photograph. It [how to handle harassment by news sources] all depends on the situation and comments. I can usually play it off as a joke to smooth things over and get through the assignment." Another respondent wrote: "I usually don't react at all or remind them I'm a professional and expect to be treated in a businesslike manner. I don't have many repeat offenders and find the women reporters who do have trouble act and dress unprofessionally." Another responded like this: "it's considered par for the course."

A reporter from a newspaper with 200 newsroom employees wrote: ". . .

reporters are not required to deal with sources who harass them in any way if they mention it to an editor." Another respondent from a smaller newspaper (with 40 newsroom employees) wrote that the issue of how to handle sexual harassment from news sources ". . . is not addressed in our handbook. When advances are made toward me on assignment, I just blow them off or turn it into a joke. It would take a lot to offend me to a point where I got angry or upset."

Many respondents said the simply didn't know how instances of sexual harassment regarding news sources are handled or should be handled, and many mentioned they had never had to face such a situation. 'I don't know," one anchor wrote in response to our question about how such cases are dealt with. "Could you publicly call them a schmuck?" she asked, and then drew a happy face in the margin of the survey.

But of those who did mention harassment from sources, most suggested that these instances are either handled by the women, or with some back-up or follow-up from an editor or supervisor. One newspaper editorial page editor's comments illustrate this approach: "I had one incident when a source was asking me out or wanting me to meet him so he could give me information. It became clear that his intent wasn't just business and it was an intimidating situation. [M]y managing editor offered to intervene and was very upset, but I told him I preferred to handle it myself and was able to do so."

Responses to the Open-Ended Questions about Sexual Harassment from Co-Workers. Comments about the sexually harassing behaviors of co-workers illustrate further the nature of a different kind of sexual harassment of women journalists. Several women employed in television station newsrooms reported the frequent, unwanted back rubs given by male co-workers, suggesting a pattern of behavior in television stations that is particularly offensive to women journalists. One such comment from a TV producer: "I had a news director who was very rude and intimidating. He would ask me things like, 'did you get laid last night?' He'd also rub my shoulders and make me uncomfortable."

Some of the more outrageous examples of sexual harassment perpetrated by co-workers were mentioned by our respondents who were television journalists. An anchor/producer with 7 years experience wrote: "A photographer pinched my nipple once while in the car. He said he did it as a joke to get me to quit biting my nails." Another wrote: "I've had a previous manager make unwanted passes, set up dinner dates [and] call them business 'appearances' when it was really a date with him, had a manager mark my period (yeah, menstrual flow) on the company calendar in the lobby of the newsroom as a warning to watch out for me on those weeks."

Work Inside and Outside the Newsroom. The study of national newspaper women we replicated found that reporters and photographers--those employees most likely to be working *outside* the newsroom--were significantly more likely to report being sexually harassed by news sources when compared to copy editors, graphic artists and others working primarily *inside* the newsroom. We expected to find the same differences in our study, so we created a new variable based on the inside/outside dichotomy. The new variable did not distinguish between television and newspaper employment, but instead split our sample according to whether one worked primarily outside the newsroom (consisting of newspaper reporters, newspaper photographers, television reporters and television videographers) and those working inside the newsroom (consisting of newspaper editors, television anchors, television producers and television editors). The cross tabulation we conducted to determine if "outside" journalists were more likely to tell us they had been harassed by news sources was not significant.

Organization Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment. We also asked our respondents if their news organization had a policy prohibiting sexual harassment. We report those results in Table 7. The national study of newspaper women journalists had found that 70.5% of newspapers had policies in place, and our study found that 83% of newspaper journalists in Kansas reported the same, with 90% of television station journalists reporting organizational policies on sexual harassment. A few television respondents said their organization had no policy, but 8% of them, and 17% of newspaper journalists in our study, said they didn't know if their organization had a policy or not.

Defining Behaviors of Sexual Harassment. Table 8 presents the degree of agreement that journalists in our study reported on five behaviors representing sexual harassment. The opinions of our respondents about these behaviors (*unwanted physical contact, telling sexual jokes, making sexual remarks or double entendres, flirting with a female coworker* and *displaying sexually-oriented posters or calendars*) mirror the national study of women newspaper journalists.

Our results indicate that about 70% of Kansas women journalists agree strongly that one behavior--*unwanted physical contact*--is sexual harassment. But they are less likely to agree that *telling sexual jokes* (where 14.9% strongly agreed) and *flirting with a female coworker* (where 4.9% strongly agreed) constitute sexual harassment. On one behavior our respondents seemed to depart from the national sample, although we were not able to test the significance of the finding. *Telling sexual jokes* was strongly endorsed as a sexually harassing behavior by more than a third (34.4%) of the national newspaper journalists, but fewer than 15 percent of our respondents agreed strongly. We thought that the inclusion of television journalists in our sample (who in written comments highlighted the prevalence and acceptance of sexual jokes in their newsrooms) may explain that result, although a test of the differences between newspaper and television journalists on that measure was not significant.[12]

Only one measure was significantly different for newspaper and television women journalists--the behavior of *displaying sex-oriented pictures or calendars in places where women also work.* These results are presented in Table 9. Over 50% of newspaper journalists thought strongly that this behavior was sexually harassing, while fewer than half that number (23.5 percent) of television journalists agreed.

Discussion

This article addresses a phenomenon--sexual harassment--with implications for the creation of news content. Although is is a phenomenon that occurs in many settings in our culture, when situated in a media organizational setting, it ssumes a different meaning and requires a different interpretation.

We suggested certain assumptions at the outset--that systematic underlying structural factors within media organizations ultimately have an impact on the media product, that the presence of women in newsrooms leads to greater diversity amongst those who work in the production of news content and will enhance the media's ability to reflect a multicultural society. It was our purpose to examine a particular phenomenon with impact on the way that journalists gather, produce and present the news at the confluence of organizational policies and individual practice, incorporating both individual level and organizational level analyses.

It is within that theoretical context that we suggest our finding that Kansas newspaper women journalists are significantly more likely to be subjected to non-physical sexual harassment by *news sources* and that their counterparts in local television stations are more likely to be harassed by their *coworkers* is a powerful discovery, with implications for media organizations, journalists and the content they produce.

There are several possible explanations for these findings. With regard to newspaper journalists, we know these results are consistent with those of the national study of newspaper women, which found news reporters and photographers who spend more time outside the newsroom are more vulnerable to being sexually harassed by news sources. Results of that study showed that nearly 60% of reporters and photographers reported being harassed sexually by sources, while only a third of copy editors, graphic artists and others who worked primarily in the newsroom reported harassment by sources.[13] But when we conducted cross tabulations of our data to see whether all journalists, regardless of media type, who work outside the newsroom were more likely to report being subjected to sexual harassment than those working inside, our results were non-significant.

It is difficult to interpret the results here without making some assumptions that we do not have the empirical data to support. However, our explanation draws on some commonly observed behaviors that call attention to the differences in the nature of the work routines that journalists employ with respect to the medium they work for, and also to the differences in the organizational climates and work environments in these two media settings.

The reader will recall that we found significant differences between media organizations with regard to the frequency of news source harassment--newspaper women were significantly more likely to report harassment by news sources than were television journalists. However, we can't presume that newspaper journalists are more likely to work outside their newsrooms as opposed to television journalists. Television reporters are at least as likely to work outside the newsroom as newspaper reporters, and maybe more so.

The differences are possibly these: that newspaper journalists working outside the newsroom do so as lone reporters or photographers, as opposed to the television videographer and reporter who travel in pairs to conduct interviews with news sources. It may be that the mere presence of a third person mitigates the likelihood that a source will engage in inappropriate behavior. It may also be that with the presence of a video camera and its concomitant ability to record behaviors on videotape, sources may simply curb inappropriate behaviors directed toward television reporters, since they could be witnessed either by the second party, or recorded. This "witness" presence removes the possibility for a "he said/she said" defense based on the word of one party against another.

Clearly, with regard to our second and third research questions, there are significant and compelling differences in the nature of sexual harassment experiences of newspaper and television women who work as journalists. And, we suggest that these results are consistent with those studies that *have* identified content as a variable, and have found that organizational and occupational influences are greater than individual characteristics on news content.[14] Our results bring into high relief, in one very narrow realm, one of the points where organizational differences seem to be most extreme. We believe that understanding what influence these systematic underlying structural factors may ultimately have on the media product requires this kind of fine-grained examination of points where organizational characteristics are brought into focus. Obviously, the next step is to formally link these differences we have identified between women working in these two media settings with the products of their work.

Additionally, the written comments of our respondents show that situations of sexual harassment are as individual as the people involved and they illustrate the range and variability in the nature of these experiences for women working in both professional media settings. Organizational responses to sexual harassment are varied, too, but even in news organizations where policies are in place, significant numbers of women still report sexual harassment is a problem.

With regard to the final research question, our results suggested that television journalists may be somewhat less likely to find sexually-oriented jokes, remarks and displayed images to be sexually harassing but only one of our behavioral variables was significantly different for women working for different media organizations. However, the comments of television journalists underscore the distinct occupational environment and culture of the television newsroom, and the tolerence of employees of both sexes for the overtly harassing behaviors that occur there.

We return to responses to our open-ended questions to further illustrate this point. Several television journalists wrote that the non-physical sexual harassment represented by inappropriate sexual comments is simply routine in their newsrooms. One anchor/producer with 14 years experience wrote: ". . . things are said and accepted in a newsroom that might be considered 'sexual harassment' in other places. Sexual innuendoes and comments are very common." Another TV reporter with six years of experience told us "jokes are the most common, frequent example [of sexual harassment]. They aren't directed at specific people, they're just inappropriate comments."

An anchor/reporter with seven years experience noted: "The newsroom is a work environment of its own kind. Sex talk, profanities, etc., are sometimes commonplace. If people are offended, others will hopefully not 'talk the talk' around that person -- but, you probably shouldn't go into news if this bothers you!!"

Another television journalist who works as a special projects editor wrote: "The newsroom is by nature a hostile environment. Most of it is not directed at anyone nor intended to insult. If something is offensive you say so, and people back off. That's the environment at our station because that's what the male-dominated management supports."

None of the comments of our newspaper journalists offered a "that's the way it is" explanation for their newsroom environment. We can't help but be concerned with this tolerance for a hostile work environment in local television station newsrooms, and wonder if it will continue long. The work atmosphere there seems to encourage harassment, so much so that many television journalists in our study acknowledged that harassment is a widely-accepted norm of behavior. When we run the risk of assuming sexual harassing behavior is too common to matter, we make a serious mistake. This should be of particular concern to educators working with broadcast students, who have an obligation to prepare their students for this reality of work in television news.

One theoretical explanation for why sexual harassment occurs was advanced by Guten[15] who argues that sexual harassment is explained as sex-role spill over. His theory is that gender-based expectations about behavior outside the workplace "spill over" in the work environment so that women working especially in male-dominated occupations and settings are the most likely to be sexually harassed. It is not difficult to extend the spill-over theory to television newsrooms, which is reflected in the gender-based assignment to important jobs. The television news program formula relies on a structure that mirrors a heterosexual relationship, and the anchor desk is routinely occupied by a male anchor and a female anchor. These "on-air families" are unique to television, didn't exist before the early 1970s, and quite possibly contribute to the atmosphere and discussion that would be more appropriate to the bedroom than the newsroom.

We also note the retention consequences of sexual harassment, which the comments from one newspaper reporter with nine years of experience illustrate--that the harassment respondents experienced in their careers had occurred when they were employed by another news organization. That respondent wrote: "while covering the Kansas Legislature, two legislators made passes. When my editor heard about it, he called me in and said he could understand why they might do that because I was an attractive woman! (This was at my previous job.)" We can only speculate here how much the incidence of sexual harassment, and they way it is handled by management, might contribute to the departure of employees who chose to leave rather than stay and endure or confront such behavior.

We are equally concerned at the incidence of news source harassment of newspaper journalists especially, and hope that the results of this study should alert managers in each media setting to the unique problems specific to their organizations. While we know most already have sexual harassment policies in place, it may be that managers could use the findings in this study as a reality check to reevaluate their policies. In some cases, training programs for employees that both sensitize them to the behaviors that constitute sexual harassment, and that provide coping strategies for employees--especially those who work alone as reporters and photographers for newspapers in those boundary spanning roles--are needed.

Finally, if there is a pattern to these differences in the experiences of television and newspaper women journalists, it is that journalists are most likely to be harassed where the behavior is accepted. As one scholar has noted, "Perpetrators only break the rules and harass where they think they can get away with it."[16]

We conclude our discussion of these results on an upbeat, however, with a comment made by one of our respondents, a newspaper reporter with 16 years of experience. She wrote that most men in her newsroom "support a harassment-free newsroom. But journalism, I suspect, is no different from other professions: there are still some clueless Neanderthals out there. It's better than it used to be, but not as good as it could be."

Table 1

Age, Years as a Journalist, Number and Gender of Newsroom Employees and Supervisors and Other Demographic Characteristics Among Women in Kansas Newspaper and TV Newsrooms Compared to U.S. Daily Newspapers

		Means		
(n)	KS Television (50)	KS Newspaper (53)	KS Total (103)	U.S. Newspapers* (227)
Age	31.8	33.9	32.9	38.4
Years as a Journalist	8.9	10.5	9.7	11.6
Estimated Number of newsroom employees	46.6	103.9	76.1	61.2
Percentage of female newsroom employees	39.3	39.8	39.6	46.6
		Percent		
Women whose immediate supervisor is:				
Male	78.0	69.2	73.5	67.0
Female	18.0	30.8	24.5	30.8
One or more of each	4.0	0.0	2.0	2.2
Other personal characteristics Marital Status:				
Never married	49.0	46.2	47.5	41.0
Married	43.1	50.0	46.6	47.6
Divorced	7.8	1.9	4.8	9.3
Other	0.0	1.9	1.0	2.2

*Percentages given in this column are from Walsh-Childers, et. al. , 1996, provided for comparison with Kansas data.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 2

Evaluation of Sexual Harassment as a Problem for Women Journalists and for Respondent's Own Career

How much of a problem is sexual harassment for women as newspaper/television journalists?

	Percent			
(n)	KS Television (50)	KS Newspaper (53)	KS Total (103)	U.S. Newspapers* (227)
No problem at all	10.0	3.7	6.8	18.1
Not much of a problem	50.0	49.1	49.5	21.7
Somewhat of a problem	36.0	39.6	37.9	48.7
A significant problem	4.0	7.5	5.8	9.3
A very serious problem	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2

How much of a problem has sexual harassment been for respondent in her own career?

	Percent			
(n)	KS Television (50)	KS Newspaper (53)	KS Total (103)	U.S. Newspapers* (227)
No problem at all	24.0	17.0	20.4	29.5
Not much of a problem	48.0	56.6	52.4	34.4
Somewhat of a problem	24.0	24.5	24.3	28.6
A significant problem	2.0	0.0	0.9	5.7
A very serious problem	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.8

*Percentages given in this column are from Walsh-Childers, et. al. , 1996, provided for comparison with Kansas data.

Table 3

Frequency of Non-Physical Sexual Harassment by Types of Possible Perpetrators

	Percent of Women Reporting Non-Physical Sexual Harassment				
(N=103)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Nearly always or always
By supervisors	54.9 *(46.3)*	24.5 *(28.9)*	17.6 *(20.3)*	2.0 *(4.8)*	1.0 *(0.0)**
By same-level coworkers	27.2 *(38.3)*	41.7 *(32.6)*	24.3 *(22.9)*	4.9 *(5.3)*	1.9 *(0.9)*
By subordinates	45.1 *(52.7)*	28.4 *(23.7)*	21.6 *(21.0)*	3.9 *(2.2)*	1.0 *(0.4)*
By news sources or employees of news sources	37.9 *(25.1)*	32.0 *(27.3)*	22.3 *(34.4)*	7.8 *(8.8)*	0.0 *(0.9)***

*Percentages given in parentheses are from Walsh-Childers, et. al., 1996, provided for comparison with Kansas data.

** Numbers in this row from the national study represent news sources only, not news sources and employees. These numbers do not total 100% because some respondents in the national study reported they had no contact with sources or their employees.

Table 4

Frequency of Physical Sexual Harassment by Types of Possible Perpetrators

	Percent of Women Reporting Physical Sexual Harassment				
(N=103)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Nearly always or always
By supervisors	85.3 *(89.0)*	9.8 *(6.6)*	3.9 *(4.4)*	0.0 *(0.4)*	1.0 *(0.0)**
By same-level coworkers	75.7 *(80.6)*	18.4 *(14.5)*	3.9 *(4.8)*	1.0 *(0.0)*	1.0 *(0.0)*
By subordinates	82.5 *(86.8)*	12.6 *(10.1)*	3.9 *(3.1)*	0.0 *(0.0)*	1.0 *(0.0)*
By news sources or employees of news sources	74.8 *(71.4)*	19.4 *(19.4)*	4.8 *(5.7)*	0.0 *(0.4)*	1.0 *(0.0)***

*Percentages given in parentheses are from Walsh-Childers, et. al., 1996, provided for comparison with Kansas data.

** Numbers in this row from the national study represent news sources only, not news sources and employees. These numbers do not total 100% because some respondents in the national study reported they had no contact with sources or their employees.

Table 5

*Percentages of Women Journalists Experiencing Non-Physical Sexual Harassment by **Same-Level Coworkers**, by Media Employment Type (Newspaper or Television)*

	Women Journalist Employed by Newspaper or Television	
(n=103)	KS Television (50)	KS Newspaper (53)
Percent experiencing harassment by same-level coworker at least sometime	38.0	24.5

Chi-square (d.f. = 4) = 12.32, $p < .05$

Table 6

Percentages of Women Journalists Experiencing Non-Physical Sexual Harassment by ***News Sources*** *or Employees of News Sources, by Media Employment Type (Newspaper or Television)*

	Women Journalist Employed by Newspaper or Television	
(n=103)	KS Television (50)	KS Newspaper (53)
Percent experiencing harassment by news sources at least sometime	22.0	37.7

Chi-square (d.f. = 3) = 8.37, $p < .05$

Table 7

News Organization Has Sexual Harassment Policy

	Percent			
(n)	KS Television (50)	KS Newspaper (53)	KS Total (103)	U.S. Newspapers* (227)
Employer has a written policy?				
Yes	90.0	83.0	86.4	70.5
No	2.0	0.0	1.0	13.2
Don't Know	8.0	17.0	12.6	16.3

*Percentages given in this column are from Walsh-Childers, et. al. , 1996, provided for comparison with Kansas data.

Table 8

Women Journalists' Definitions of Behaviors as Sexual Harassment

Percent of Women Reporting Physical Sexual Harassment

(N=103)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Unwanted physical contact	69.6 *(79.3)*	23.5 *(19.4)*	2.9 *(0.9)*	2.0 *(0.4)*	2.0 *(0.0)**
Telling sexual jokes	14.9 *(34.4)*	35.6 *(46.3)*	20.8 *(9.7)*	25.7 *(9.7)*	3.0 *(0.0)*
Making sexual remarks or double entendres	32.7 *(48.0)*	42.6 *(39.6)*	14.9 *(8.4)*	7.9 *(4.0)*	2.0 *(0.0)*
Flirting with a female coworker	4.9 *(7.9)*	19.4 *(30.0)*	25.5 *(28.2)*	44.7 *(33.0)*	5.8 *(0.9)*
Displaying sex-oriented posters or calendars	37.9 *(47.1)*	33.0 *(39.2)*	18.4 *(8.8)*	7.8 *(4.4)*	2.9 *(0.0)*

*Percentages given in parentheses are from Walsh-Childers, et. al., 1996, provided for comparison with Kansas data.

Table 9

Women Journalists Who Say Sexual Harassment is Defined by Displaying Sex-Oriented Posters or Calendars by Media Employment Type (Newspaper or Television)

	Women Journalist Employed by Newspaper or Television	
(n=103)	KS Television (50)	KS Newspaper (53)
Percent who strongly believe displaying sex-oriented posters or calendars is sexual harassment	23.5	51.9

Chi-square (d.f. = 4) = 11.96, $p < .05$

Notes

1. Kim Walsh-Childers, Jean Chance and Kristin Herzog, "Sexual Harassment of Women Journalists," *Journalism Quarterly* 73 (autumn 1996): 559-581
2. See U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, *Sexual Harassment in the Federal Government: An Update*. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), where 26 percent of women respondents reported undesireable touching, leaning over, surrounding, or pinching.
3. Commerce Clearing House, *Sexual Harassment Manual for Managers and Supervisors: How to Prevent and Resolve Sexual Harassment Complaints in the Workplace*. Chicago, IL,: Commerce Clearing House, Inc., 1991).
4. See James D. Thompson, *Organizations in Action: Social Science Bases of Administrative Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967).
5. See Kay Mills, "What Difference Do Women Journalists Make?" in *Women, Media , and Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) 41-55.
6. Walsh-Childers, Chance and Herzog, "Sexual Harassment of Women Journalists."
7. See Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, *Mediating the Message* (White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers).
8. This allowed us to include both newspapers and television stations from Kansas City, MO, which have significant circulation and audience in the state of Kansas.
9. Bacon's Information Inc. *Bacon's Newspaper Directory: Directory of Daily and Community Newspapers, News Services, Syndicates*. 45th ed. Chicago, 1997.
10. Please note that our survey introduction and questions were worded so as not to suggest an expectation on our part that the respondent HAD been harassed sexually. We provided response options FIRST that indicated *no problem* with sexual harassment, or that respondents had *never* experienced any of the possible types of harassment.
11. We did not have access to the raw data generated by the Walsh-Childers, Chance and Herzog study so that we could create a data file with both our data set and their data set. Thus, we were unable to make a statistical comparison between the two. Nonetheless, as the tables reported at the end of this manuscript show, the percentages reported in the nation newspaper women journalists study and ours are very close in most instances. Where there are large numerical differences between our reported percentages and theirs (i.e., 20 percentage points or greater), we are assuming that the percentage gap likely exceeds the random error variance found in our study and the national study. Consequently, we are assuming that any large gap is very likely statistically different.
12. We would note that although these results were non-significant, they were each in the direction that would indicate greater tolerance for these behaviors by the television journalists than by the newspaper journalists.
13. Walsh-Childers, Chance and Herzog, "Sexual Harassment of Women Journalists," 571.

14 See Lori A. Bergen, "Testing the Relative Strength of Individual and Organizational Characteristics in Predicting Content of Journalists' Best Work," Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University-Bloomington, 1991; Paul M. Hirsch, "Occupational, Organizational, and Institutional Models in Mass Media Research," in Paul M. Hirsch, Peter V. Miller, and F. Gerald Kline, eds., *Strategies for Communication Research*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1977); and Shoemaker and Reese, *Mediating the Message*.

15. B.A. Guten, *Sex and the Workplace* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985).

16. Fiona M. Wilson, *Organizational Behavior and Gender* (London: McGraw Hill, 1995), 230.

Modeling Strategy for Mass Media: A Resource-Based Approach

By Hugh J. Martin
Mass Media Ph.D. student
Michigan State University

Address: Hugh J. Martin
1668 Linden St.
East Lansing, MI 48823
517-336-0772
martinhu@pilot.msu.edu

A paper presented to the Media Management & Economics Division of
the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication,
Annual Convention, Baltimore, MD. August 5-8, 1998.

Abstract

The resource-based view of strategy argues firms gain a competitive advantage by assembling bundles of valuable, difficult to imitate resources. This view suggests ways that individual firms can acquire and exploit such resources. This paper integrates the resource-based view with existing mass media research to develop a firm-level analysis of how strategy influences competition among advertiser-supported media. This discussion argues that quality is an important variable, examining how strategic decisions influence the development of a reputation for delivering quality content. Theoretical propositions are developed from this discussion.

Introduction

Mass media are a primary source of entertainment, information and ideas that shape and define culture (McQuail, 1994). In the United States, this role is given special protection by the First Amendment to the Constitution. However, media companies seek profit and competitive advantage just as companies in other industries do.

Newspapers, television, and other forms of media earn only part or none of their revenue from consumers (Lacy & Simon, 1993; Picard, 1989). The bulk of their income comes from advertising sales. Advertiser-supported media offer one product to consumers--the content media firms produce. These firms offer a second product to advertisers--access to consumers of media content. For these firms, the audience is a resource which can be sold (Bucklin, Caves, & Lo, 1989; Dertouzos & Trautman, 1990; Ferguson, 1983; Martin, 1997) but cannot be "owned." Advertiser-supported media must, instead, create a psychological bond with the audience because without consumer loyalty they have nothing to sell to advertisers.

This means managers of advertiser-supported mass media must adopt strategies aimed at creating an intangible asset (Itami, 1987); a reputation for producing high-quality content. But what are these strategies? This paper integrates strategy and mass media literature to develop some preliminary answers to that question. The paper offers a theoretical analysis of the advantages of a reputation for quality, and of variables that may critically affect such reputations. This analysis is useful to researchers and practitioners who may view competition among media firms from different perspectives.

Mass media researchers are concerned with variables affecting competition, because competition is considered vital to ensuring that diverse points of view are represented in mass media (McQuail, 1994, chap. 5) as envisioned by the First Amendment. Researchers (see, e.g.

Picard, Winter, McCombs, & Lacy, 1988; Ramstad, 1997; Wirth & Bloch, 1995) interested in the economic constraints on competition have adopted the Industrial Organization approach to the study of media firms --market structure affects firm conduct, which affects firm performance.

These studies can usefully be integrated with strategy research–which has also adopted tools of modern neoclassical economics such as the Industrial Organization model (Rumelt, Schendel, & Teece, 1991). However, strategy research focuses on how firms *overcome* the constraints of competition, not on removing those constraints.

Understanding the sources of competitive advantage also has particular urgency for practitioners who manage mass media firms. This is because changes in technology – such as the maturation of cable television and the development of the Internet (Hickey, 1997) – have forced many firms to reevaluate their competitive environment.

Therefore, this paper adopts a definition of strategy as a consistent, goal-oriented pattern of behavior (MacCrimmon, 1993) by mass media firms. Strategic decisions determine which markets firms enter, and their policies for competition in those markets. (Rumelt et al., 1991). Strategy involves irreversible commitments by media firms.

The paper explores mass media strategy in three parts. First is a review of theory and research into the behavior of advertiser-supported mass media firms. This section also introduces the resource-based view of the firm developed by management scholars. The second part of the paper integrates mass media and strategy research to develop a description of important variables affecting competition among advertiser-supported mass media firms. The third part of the paper extends this description to develop theoretical propositions.

A Question of Quality

If advertiser-supported media sell access to consumers, then the audience can be viewed as a critical resource for the firm. For example, studies of newspapers have modeled advertiser "demand for audience" (Ferguson, 1983, p. 637) and the interdependencies between circulation price and the advertising revenues that depend on circulation (Bucklin et al., 1989). However, contractual barriers that might limit competitors access to audience members are small or nonexistent (Martin, 1997). For example, subscriptions are short-term contracts that consumers easily can cancel. Nonsubscribing audience members can switch to a competitors at will.

Modeling effects of quality on demand

This suggests, then, that media firms must reduce the attractiveness of competitors by altering the "price" of their product. Price includes the opportunity cost--or value of an opportunity forgone--of reading or watching a particular medium.[1] For example, the opportunity cost of watching television might be the forgone value of spending that time reading a newspaper. However, as newspaper or television content becomes more compelling, it's value to the consumer increases. This means the consumer is less likely to switch even if the competition's price decreases.

---

[1] A decision to consume an additional unit of some product is based on a calculation of that value, or utility, received from that product versus the utility received by consuming some other good. For example, a choice between working an extra hour and not working depends on the price of labor--when hourly wages equal the value of the forgone hour of leisure, the decision will be to keep working. See Varian, H. R. (1993). *Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach.* (3rd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & Co., p. 171. Thus, changes in price will alter consumption decisions by altering the relative value of such trade-offs. Prices do not need to be expressed in terms of money--money provides a medium of exchange and a way to store value associated with various goods. See Nicholson, W. (1995). *Microeconomic theory: Basic principles and extensions.* (6th ed.). New York: The Dryden Press, p. 140-144, 537.

In formal terms, this means media firms may be able to reduce consumer elasticity of demand.[2] For example, Lacy (1989) modeled how quality affects demand elasticity when newspaper firms compete. Lacy argued that if newspaper readers expect a minimum level of acceptable quality, there will be a kink in the newspaper's demand curve. Demand is more elastic below the minimum quality level, and less elastic above the minimum quality level. This means consumers are less sensitive to price changes above the minimum quality level. Higher quality makes the product more useful--consumers receive more utility.

If the utility consumers receives exceed the price paid for the newspaper, that excess utility is called consumer surplus. Martin (1997, p. 15-16) developed a simple model of consumer surplus (V) from newspaper use as a function of price (P), utility (U, determined by the quality of content) and opportunity cost:

$$V = U - P_n - P_{oc}$$

where P_n is the cover price of a newspaper and P_{oc} is the opportunity cost of the time devoted to reading the newspaper. Opportunity cost is assumed to represent the value placed on using a competing form of mass media (Martin, 1997). Therefore the cover price of a newspaper must be:

$$P_n \leq U - P_{oc}$$

or consumers will not subscribe. This model implies changes in the quality of either the newspaper or competing media can alter the elasticity of demand. More generally, removing the

---

[2] Demand elasticity is actually a ratio of the measuring the change in consumption of a product when its price, a consumer's income, or the price of a competing product changes. For example,

$$\text{Price Elasticity} = \frac{\text{percentage change in quantity}}{\text{percentage change in price}}.$$

If percentage change in quantity exceeds the percentage change in price, demand is elastic. If the changes are equal, demand is unit elastic. If the change in price exceeds the change in quantity, demand in inelastic. A formal discussion is in Nicholson, W. (1995). *Microeconomic theory: Basic principles and extensions.* (6th ed.). New York: The Dryden Press, p. 202-206.

cover price from the equation implies increased quality reduces demand elasticity for media which consumers do not pay for.

Quality is a complex, multi-dimensional construct. Lacy (1989, p. 44) defined the quality of news as how well it serves aggregate wants and needs of consumers across time. Litman (February 1992) modeled consumers as optimizing television viewing by trading off two dimensions of programming quality – diversity of available programming and depth of individual programs. McQuail (1994, p. 290-291) described how mass media audiences form around common interests, such as social ties, or common habits of loyal use.[3]

The relationship between market variables, such as competition, and quality is described by the so-called financial commitment model developed by Litman and Bridges (1986) This model (Lacy, 1992; Litman & Bridges, 1986) argues there is a positive relationship between the intensity of competition and the financial resources a firm devotes to covering news. An increase in resources results in increased quality. Changes in quality also have a positive relationship with changes in readership, or circulation. A review of empirical research (Lacy, 1992) concluded there is support for the financial commitment model.

Some research on quality

The multi-dimensional characteristics of quality are reflected in the variety of measures found in empirical studies. For example, two studies analyzed content (Becker, Beam and Russial, 1978; Lacy and Fico, 1990) and found a positive relationship between circulation and quality. The first study only included 109 New England newspapers, and the second study used 106 dailies without controlling for market variables except population.

---

[3] Specifically, audiences may consist of (a) members of a social group with shared ties to a media source; (b) aggregates of individuals with no direct ties who share a common need -- such as psychological arousal – for media content; (c) aggregates of individuals who are fans of some specific media content; and (d) audiences recruited by the media which develop a habit of loyal use. McQuail (1994, p. 290-291) explains that the first and last kinds of audiences can be stable over time. The composition of fan groups may change, but there is some stability in those audiences too.

Other studies examined relationships between quality and audience. Lacy and Martin (in press) found that 64 newspapers owned by a company with a reputation for poor quality lost an average of 6 percent more circulation penetration than competitors did from 1980 to 1990. However, the study did not directly measure quality. A case study (Hawley, 1992) concluded dissatisfaction with content was the primary reason that readers drop newspapers. The study only included two-dozen households.

Husini (1988) concluded the survival of new magazines depends on how well they focus on the needs and wants of their readers. The study used an indirect quality measure--the ratio of editorial to advertising pages.

Two television programming studies (Grant, 1994; Youn, 1994) concluded that when more channels were offered, viewers exhibited clear preferences for some types of programming. This can also be considered an indirect measure of the connection between quality and media consumption.

Four other studies, all involving newspapers, used expenditures on news and editorials as a quality measure. The first (Blankenburg and Friend, 1994) concluded expenditures on news and editorials at 46 dailies were not strongly associated with maintaining newspaper circulation. However, in the second study Blankenburg (1995) concluded publishers of 29 newspapers compensated for a 1990 economic slump by increasing subscription prices, not by cutting expenditures for news. Neither study controlled for level of competition, and the small samples preclude generalization.

The third and fourth studies (Blankenburg & Ozanich, 1993; Lacy, Shaver, & St. Cyr, 1996) concluded spending on publicly-owned newspapers is positively related to the degree of control over voting stock retained by the original owners or their heirs. The second study also found competition is also positively related to spending. The studies included most publicly-owned U.S. newspaper companies, but neither study directly measured quality.

Thus, theoretical models of advertiser-supported media that identify quality as an important variable have some empirical support. However, these studies also suggest market variables such as competition, are not the sole determinant of quality. This point is highlighted by four of the newspaper studies.

The first study (Lacy and Martin, in press) concluded that a newspaper company suffered a significant loss of circulation penetration in a period when its management placed a priority on high profit margins. The second and third studies (Blankenburg & Ozanich, 1993; Lacy et al., 1996) the degree of control by the original owners or their heirs influences spending at publicly owned newspaper companies. Presumably, this reflects differences in management policies.

The fourth study modeled quality as the number of editorial employees at newspapers (Bucklin et al., 1989). This study found positive relationships between circulation (p. 640) and between a newspaper's monopoly power and the number of employees (p. 645). The number of employees was negatively related to intense competition. However, there also was a positive correlation between editorial employees and newspapers occupying a secondary market position. These results seem contradictory--they suggest intensely competitive newspapers spend less on news coverage, but other competitive newspapers and papers that that lack competition spend more.

An alternate explanation suggests that competition alone does not determine spending for editorial employees. Managers at newspapers with monopoly power may employ larger staffs because of competitive slack. Newspapers locked in circulation battles for the same consumers may be forced to cut costs by cutting editorial employees. However, newspapers in secondary market positions may compete for different readers than the dominant newspaper, so they can afford to employ more journalists.[4]

These examples show current research has not specified a model of media firms that accounts for all the significant variables influencing strategy. Industrial Organization research focuses on market level variables, such as competition, which may be necessary but are not always sufficient to explain how advertiser-supported media gain a competitive advantage. Strategy researchers (Conner, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984) have argued that explaining firm level behavior also requires a theory describing the individual firm.

The resource-based view of the firm

The so-called resource based view of the firm (Barney, 1991; Conner, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Rumelt, 1984; Wernerfelt, 1984) is rooted in the neoclassical argument that firms must be efficient to compete effectively. If all firms produce at the lowest possible cost, how do some firms gain a competitive advantage? The resource-based view argues firms must acquire heterogeneous resources that are rare, valuable and difficult to imitate to win a competitive advantage. For mass media, such a resource might be a loyal audience that advertisers want to reach.

Rumelt (1984) describes how strategic decisions, which concern where and how a firm will enter new markets, can lead to competitive advantage. Firms must start producing a new product while facing "ambiguity as to what the factors of production actually are and as to how they interact" (Rumelt, 1984, p. 562). This uncertainty means new entrants in a product market enjoy different degrees of efficiency--some firms have lower costs than others. This allows firms to take advantage of so-called isolating mechanisms that limit the distribution of profits once equilibrium is reached.[5]

---

[4] This is consistent with the umbrella model of competition (Lacy & Simon, 1993, p. 112-115) -- regional dailies compete with dailies in satellite cities, and those papers compete with suburban dailies and suburban weeklies.

Rumelt argues isolating mechanisms result from causal ambiguity about the source of differences in efficiency; those differences limit market entry by other firms and thus limit competition. Isolating mechanisms include a firm's "reputation, and brand image" (Rumelt, 1984, p. 567) which cannot be duplicated by competitors who enter the market later. Wernerfelt (1984) described how monopolistic control over a resource creates a barrier allowing firms to appropriate earnings that otherwise might go to other users of the resource. For example, if the first firm to enter a market acquires a valuable resource, that firm can impose costs on competitors who later try to acquire the same resource.

However, firms can overcome resource barriers if they have cost advantages in related markets. A firm can leverage its savings in the related market to help pay the cost of entering the market where the resource barrier exists (Wernerfelt, 1984).

These are the basic arguments describing how heterogeneous production creates competitive advantage, and how that advantage can be eroded. However, Barney (1991) argued the mere existence of heterogeneous resources is not sufficient to create competitive advantage.

---

[5] Profits are defined as earnings that exceed fair compensation for an entrepreneur's investment of time and capital. This can be thought of as any return above the minimum needed to persuade an entrepreneur to stay in business (Lacy & Simon, 1993, p. 59). Neoclassic economics argues that when supply and demand are in balance and all firms produce efficiently with identical costs, returns just equal the amount that can be earned from alternative investments--so no economic profits are earned. See Nicholson, W. (1995). *Microeconomic theory: Basic principles and extensions*. (6th ed.). New York: The Dryden Press, p. 462. The resource-based view extends this model to examine how equilibrium might occur when firms produce with differing costs, allowing some to earn economic profits.

Such resources must also be valuable to the firm because they are rare within an industry. If other firms can imitate heterogeneous resources, the firm's advantage will be competed away.

Peteraf (1993) stated three conditions that allow resource heterogeneity to provide a competitive advantage. First, there must be limits to competition for resources so the cost of acquisition is not bid up until it equals the earnings generated by the resource. Second, there must be limits on competition after the resource is acquired so the owner's profits are not competed away. Third, there must be barriers to keep valuable resources from being traded away to competitors.

Other researchers have described how these conditions might be met. Conner (1991) argued resources may be acquired for less than their true value to a given firm if the firm combines the resource with other production inputs in a process that is hard to imitate. Barney (1986) argued the complex combination of values, beliefs and assumptions that define a firm's approach to business--its culture--can be a resource that generates profits.

Dierickx and Cool (1989) described the creation of unique, nontradeable resources as a dynamic process which, by implication, depends on both a firm's culture and its physical assets. Strategic resources can be viewed as stocks which accumulate over time. These stocks result from selecting appropriate flows of expenditures aimed at creating such stocks. Dierickx and Cool add that strategic stocks are difficult to imitate because competitors cannot speed up the process of accumulating similar resources. However, strategic assets erode if they are not maintained.

Resource-based theorists also identify a firm's reputation as a source of competitive advantage (Rumelt, 1984; Wernerfelt, 1984). Reputation is an asset that may develops over time, and can erode if not maintained. However, random events – luck – also can influence initial consumption decisions which result in a permanent advantage when a firm's product has characteristics which make it increasingly expensive for consumers to adopt alternatives (Arthur, 1989; David, 1985).[6] These so-called increasing returns are often associated with new technologies. For example, as more consumers purchase one type of VCR and tapes for those machines became increasingly common, costs associated with alternate formats increase.

The resource-based view has been criticized by Collis (1994), who argues a firm's competitive advantage can be lost even if competitors fail to imitate a firm's unique capabilities – other firms may develop alternative capabilities that are just as effective. However, this argument does not explain how developing alternative capabilities poses significant problems that are not addressed by resource-based theorists when discussing how firms must try to limit imitation.

In addition, Heiner (1983) developed a general decision model accounting for environmental uncertainty and differences in a decision maker's ability to recognize the true state of the world.[7] Heiner's model suggests that if there is variance in the accuracy of estimates and the ability to learn from mistakes,some people will make more correct decisions than other

---

[6] Three conditions interact to produce increasing returns. First, technical interrelatedness means different parts of a system must be compatible. For example, different videotape formats require different VCRs. Second, there are economies of scale; costs decrease as they are spread across more units. The cost of a VCR decreases as more are manufactured. Third, investments are quasi-irreversible because costs of making a switch exceed the benefits. An example is adoption of the QWERTY keyboard despite the existence of easier to use alternatives (David, 1985).

[7] Let $U = u(\mathbf{p}, \mathbf{e})$, where **p** is a vector of perceptual variables representing ability to correctly understand relationships between behavior and the environment, and **e** is a vector of environmental variables determining the true complexity of a decision problem. Then :

U = uncertainty about true states of the world;
r(U) = the probability of recognizing the right conditions to make a gain:
w(U)= the probability of selecting an action at the wrong time to make a gain:
l(e) is the performance loss from wrong decisions:
g(e) is the performance gain from correct decisions:
$\pi(e)$ is the right time for a decision and $1 - \pi(e)$ is the wrong time.

The condition is:

$$\frac{r(U)}{w(U)} > \frac{l(e)}{g(e)} \times \frac{1-\pi(e)}{\pi(e)}$$

See Heiner (1983, p. 564-566).

people.[8] Thus, the model suggests firms with managers who best understand the true state of the world will create decision rules that are better adapted to those states.

An Integrated View of Valuable Mass Media Resources

The mass media literature suggests there is a positive relationship between quality and mass media consumption (see, e.g. Bucklin et al., 1989; Hawley, 1992; Husini, 1988; Lacy, 1989; Lacy & Martin, in press; Martin, 1997; Miller, 1997). Increasing quality increases the utility consumers receive, thereby decreasing the opportunity cost of consuming a given firm's content. Media firms that create quality content reduce consumer elasticity of demand, and should enjoy a competitive advantage.

Quality is difficult to measure because it represents a combination of tangible and intangible factors which, ultimately, exist in the mind of the consumer (McQuail, 1994). However, intangible assets are "often a firm's only real source of competitive edge" (Itami, 1987, p. 1) because they are hard to accumulate, have multiple uses, and can be inputs and outputs of business activities.

For example, quality might be represented by a newspaper's reputation for producing credible news accounts or a television network's reputation for producing entertaining programming. In both cases, quality is the result of a complex mix of observable factors, such as factual accuracy or the physical attractiveness of a television star, and unobservable factors, such as the ability of newspaper or television writers to produce compelling stories. In other words, the ability to reduce consumer elasticity of demand depends on a causally complex relationship involving the firm, people in the firm, and consumers.

---

[8] Cognitive models suggest such variance exists. For example, chess experts recognize more patterns among pieces than players of lesser ability. See Chase, W. G., & Simon, H. A. (1973). Perception in chess. *Cognitive Psychology, 4*, 55-81.

The resource-based literature suggests that such resource bundles can be result from (a) first mover advantages in creating consumer preferences (Rumelt et al., 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984), (b) the ability of managers to exploit resources or product characteristics more efficiently than other firms (Barney, 1986; Conner, 1991; Peteraf, 1993), and (c) the firm's ability to maintain strategic resources as they accumulate over time (Dierickx & Cool, 1989).

First-mover advantages

The first firm to acquire a resource can impose costs on competitors who want to use the same resource (Wernerfelt, 1984). For example, many morning newspapers thrived while afternoon newspapers vanished after World War II. One factor contributing to the failure of afternoon papers was increasing urban traffic and suburban sprawl. Delivery trucks had to battle daytime traffic while covering longer distances to deliver papers. Meanwhile, the new medium of television offered an alternative source of afternoon news. Morning papers were insulated from the effects of these changes – their delivery trucks traveled at hours when there was little or no traffic on the roads.

Thus, newspapers that established a morning publication cycle first were able to impose costs on afternoon dailies which might have switched to morning publication. In most cases, this cost was too high to overcome.

That is not the end of the story. As newspapers battled for readers, papers with increasing circulation attracted more and more advertising (Lacy & Simon, 1993: p. 96-99). Advertisers abandoned papers with smaller circulation, and those papers responded by cutting prices while trying to increase quality. However, these tactics often failed because the larger paper enjoyed economies of scale--costs were spread across more readers as circulation increased, so it cost less for advertisers to reach each reader. Thus, newspapers which either enjoyed greater scale economies because of their position in the marketplace, or whose managers were first to recognize the importance of this factor, earned a sustained competitive advantage.

These examples also illustrate how changes in the market can erode first-mover advantages. Although differences in format and content make newspapers and television imperfect substitutes from both the audience and the advertiser's point of view (Lacy & Simon, 1993; Owen & Wildman, 1992), newspapers suffered losses to the new technology of television. This fundamental change in market conditions was successfully exploited by television stations until another technology, cable, came into its own (Dimmick, Patterson, & Albarran, 1992; Litman & Sochay, 1994; Owen & Wildman, 1992). Once again, first-mover advantages became important–the company that won the local cable television franchise was often assured of a government-sponsored monopoly.

However, changes in technology can also pose special risks for first-movers when adoption of the technologies depends on increasing returns that are heavily influenced by decisions beyond the firm's control (Arthur, 1989; David, 1985). Newspaper companies that adopted early technologies for delivering electronic text were forced to abandon those investments. The dynamic nature of telecommunication and Internet technologies suggests similar risks--and potentially large rewards--exist for media firms that are first-movers in those markets.

Exploitation of production factors

A mass media firm may, by virtue of first-mover advantages, enjoy a less costly position in the market. However, unless the firm delivers quality content to consumers, such advantages will be competed away. The changes since World War II left many morning daily newspapers with a strong enough market position to have some discretion when setting prices for advertising and subscriptions (Lacy & Simon, 1993), but these papers still face competition from other regional newspapers and from television and radio.

There is a similar picture for television. Network affiliates enjoyed a dominant market position for decades, until cable became widespread (Dimmick et al., 1992; Litman & Sochay, 1994; Thomas & Litman, 1991). Now those affiliates compete with distant independent stations running syndicated programming, new networks, and a variety of specialized channels.

The increased competition resulting from changes in technology eroded long-standing rationales for limiting ownership of various forms of advertiser-supported media. For example, federal anti-monopoly rules limiting a single owner of television, AM and FM radio stations to seven of each were changed to allow each broadcaster to own up to 12 of each (Litman & Sochay, 1994, p. 252).

This suggests that advertiser-supported media must exploit existing advantages or risk erosion of their audience. Quality ultimately rests in the skills that employees have. The importance of managing skills in media organizations is underscored by the use of exclusive contracts in broadcast news. These contracts often forbid departing broadcasters from going to work for competing stations (Carter, 1992). The reason for non-compete clauses is straightforward – "station managers are searching for ways to hold market share and beat competition"(Carter, 1992, p. 55). Courts have recognized that non-compete clauses of up to three years protect a legitimate business interest similar to trade secrets or client lists.

Such contracts can be viewed as attempts to limit competition for a resource traded on the open market (Conner, 1991) – the broadcaster's skills. Broadcasting firms are trying to gain a competitive advantage by using non-compete clauses to make this resource nontradeable for some period of time.

Mass media firms have also attempted to manage competition by targeting content at consumers that advertisers consider desirable. For example, at first the Fox network only produced entertainment programming for younger viewers (Thomas & Litman, 1991, p. 150). The network struggled, then found success with a combination of syndicated programs and original content, such as *The Simpsons*, tailored for its target audience. Now the Fox strategy of starting with programming that is only on for a few nights is being imitated by other fledgling networks (Collette & Litman, 1997, p. 17).

These are just two examples of how mass media firms appear to respond to competitive pressures by building on their reputation or image to attract specific, valuable groups of consumers.

Accumulation of resources

Mass media firms can also accumulate resources over time by pursing strategies which differentiate their products in the minds of consumers.[9] The previous section described how Fox built a reputation for programming that attracted young viewers. The fact publicly-owned newspaper companies devote more resources to news coverage when they face competition (Lacy et al., 1996) is another indication that media companies may respond to competition with differentiation.

Firms can also accumulate resources by leveraging their strengths to diversify into new markets (Wernerfelt, 1984). Mass media firms that diversify have frequently cited the desire to exploit economies of scope[10] (Litman & Sochay, 1994). For example, the Fox network (Thomas

---

[9] Karnani classified strategies along two major dimensions. Cost-based strategies focus on producing at low cost. Differentiation-based strategies attempt to differentiate a product from competing products. See, Karnani, A. (1984). Generic competitive strategies-An analytical approach. *Strategic Management Journal, 5*, 367-380.

[10] Economies of scope exist if the joint-cost of producing two or more products is less than the cost of producing those products separately. See, Teece, D. J. (1980). Economies of scope and the scope of the enterprise. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, 1*, p. 224.

& Litman, 1991) and two newer competitors (Collette & Litman, 1997) are owned by large media companies with experience producing entertainment and news. Consumer magazines have crossed international boundaries to enter new markets, thereby expanding the reach of their management skills and "unique concepts" (Hafstrand, 1995, p. 12), which represents another kind of diversification. These patterns are consistent with studies showing related diversification is more profitable than unrelated diversification (Markides & Williamson, 1994; Robins & Wiersema, 1995; Scherer & Ross, 1990). However, media companies that diversify do not always enjoy economies of scope (Litman & Sochay, 1994, p. 256-261).

Diversification is not always successful partly because it poses complex problems for managers. Strategy researchers have argued that managers of diversified firms should be evaluated so they focus on areas that are relevant to successful diversification (Govindarajan & Fisher, 1990; Hill, Hitt, & Hoskisson, 1992; Hill & Hoskisson, 1987). Successful exploitation of related resources in a diverse company requires evaluation of how well managers of different business units work together, a subjective criterion that introduces politics into the equation. When different business units do not engage in related activities, this line of research argues that quantifiable performance measures--such as production costs--should be used to evaluate managers (Govindarajan & Fisher, 1990). Another study (Golden, 1992) suggests that business unit managers are most effective when they are allowed to focus on a firm's strengths – such as developing and exploiting new market opportunities – and other duties are transferred to corporate headquarters. More generally, strategy research suggests that diversified media firms cannot gain a competitive advantage just by acquiring related businesses. The internal structure of such firms must also allow managers to exploit the opportunities created by diversification.

One way to do this might be to apply specialized skills, such as those needed to gather and communicate the news, across different business units. Business units might represent a distinct medium, such as a newspaper or a television station, but operate in the same geographic market. So, for example, newspaper reporters could also contribute to the parent company's television news broadcast. Many newspaper companies are also trying to meet competitive challenges posed by the Internet (Hickey, 1997) by publishing on-line editions. This can be viewed as an effort to leverage reputations for providing quality content into a new medium.

Theoretical Propositions

The integration of mass media and strategy literature suggests that advertiser-supported media can reduce elasticity of demand by managing resources to produce high quality content. In other words, media firms must differentiate their product if they wish to gain competitive advantage. Media firms that enjoy first-mover advantages because of market position or early adoption of new technologies may be able to differentiate themselves more effectively that firms which do not. However, the literature also demonstrates that first mover and differentiation advantages can be competed away if managers fail to recognize the importance of exploiting the opportunities they present. This suggests the following propositions:

Proposition 1: Mass media firms that enter a product market early are more profitable than firms that enter a market later.

Proposition 1a: Mass media firms that adopt new communication technologies earlier are more profitable than firms that adopt such technologies later.

Proposition 1b: Mass media firms that fail to respond strategically--by changing products and competitive policies--to changing communication technologies are less profitable than firms that make such changes. This is true even if a firm adopts the new technology, but fails to adapt its strategies to the new medium.

Proposition 1c: The relationships in 1a and 1b are moderated if the new technologies have increasing returns. Firms which adopt such technologies will only be more profitable if those technologies gain widespread consumer acceptance.

For example, Proposition 1 and Proposition 1a suggest a newspaper company which began buying television stations when the technology first emerged will be more profitable than newspaper companies that waited longer to buy stations. However, Proposition 1b suggests that a newspaper which publishes on the Internet without taking full advantage of the medium's interactivity will not be as profitable as companies which do.

The theoretical discussion also suggests that mass media firms can gain a competitive advantage by more effectively managing intangible assets in concert with other resources (Barney, 1986; Conner, 1991; Dierickx & Cool, 1989; Itami, 1987). Exploiting advantages over time requires the skillful management of employees who consistently produce high-quality content so the firm can build a strong reputation with consumers. This requires a commitment of resources to producing quality content, and suggests strategies which focus only on cutting costs will erode the firm's market position. This suggests additional propositions:

Proposition 2: Mass media firms with cost-based strategies will be less profitable than mass-media firms with strategies focusing on the production of high quality content.

Proposition 2a: Mass media firms with cost-based strategies will have smaller market share than firms which focus on the production of high quality content.

These propositions suggest, for example, that television networks which respond to the increasingly competitive environment by cutting costs, perhaps by firing highly qualified employees, will suffer disproportionately large declines in market share.

The theoretical discussion also noted the importance of effective control systems within firms (Govindarajan & Fisher, 1990). Media firms which diversify into related businesses should evaluate managers according to how well they cooperate to realize economies of scope. Such firms can also gain a competitive advantage by allowing business unit managers to make strategic decisions while ignoring non-strategic functions. This suggests a third set of propositions:

Proposition 3. Mass media firms that encourage resource sharing among related business unites will perform better than firms which do not encourage such sharing. However, this relationship will be moderated by how managers are evaluated.

Proposition 3a: Firms which encourage resource sharing but evaluate business unit managers based on ability to control costs will not perform as well as firms which evaluate managers according to their cooperation with related business units.

Proposition 3b: Mass media firms which centralize control of strategic functions at the corporate level will not perform as well as firms which move control of strategic functions to the business unit level. Strategic functions focus on the production of high-quality content.

Proposition 3c: Mass media firms which focus on managing non-strategic functions, such as cost-control, at the business unit level will not perform as well as mass media firms which place these controls at the corporate level.

These propositions suggest performance differences among diversified media firms will not be completely explained by studies that focus only on structural variables such as type of ownership, firm size, the level of competition or market share. The explanatory power of such research can be increased by including the three other kinds of variables--(a) when strategies are adopted, (b) the substance of those strategies, and (c) the responsibilities and evaluation of managers carrying out those strategies.

Discussion and Conclusion

The resource-based view offers promise for extending the mass media literature toward a better understanding of how the behavior of media firms affects competition. The resource-based view complements research on quality by identifying how strategy affects quality. Advertiser-supported media depend on audiences to survive because without an audience they cannot sell advertising. However, while media consumers represent a resource for such firms, they are a resource that is effectively traded on the open market. Firms cannot control access to this critical resource unless they establish loyalty in the minds of consumers. This requires the production of content that meets consumer needs and wants.

However, the creation of such content requires complex management skills. The Industrial Organization approach focuses on structural variables, such as market share and competition, that affect strategy. The resource-based view extends this approach by focusing on management decisions that result in the accumulation of a valuable, intangible resource -- a reputation for high quality content that attracts the audience.

The preliminary discussion in this paper is a first look at how strategic decisions can produce such advantages, and how those advantages can be competed away. However, the discussion in this paper is only theoretical. The propositions that were derived should be used to develop empirically testable hypotheses as the next useful step in the integration proposed here.

References

Arthur, W. B. (1989). Competing technologies, increasing returns, and lock-in by historical events. *The Economic Journal, 99*(March), 116-131.

Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management, 17*(1), 99-120.

Barney, J. B. (1986). Organizational culture: Can it be a source of sustained competitive advantage? *Academy of Management Review, 11*(3), 656-665.

Becker, L. B., Beam, R., & Russial, J. (1978). Correlates of daily newspaper performance in New England. *Journalism Quarterly, 55*(1), 100-108.

Blankenburg, W. B. (1995). Hard times and the news hole. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 72*(3), 634-641.

Blankenburg, W. B., & Friend, R. L. (1994). Effects of cost and revenue strategies on newspaper circulation. *The Journal of Media Economics, 7*(2), 1-13.

Blankenburg, W. B., & Ozanich, G. W. (1993). The effects of public ownership on the financial performance of newspaper corporations. *Journalism Quarterly, 70*(1), 68-75.

Bucklin, R. E., Caves, R. E., & Lo, A. W. (1989). Games of survival in the US newspaper industry. *Applied Economics, 21*, 631-649.

Carter, S. (1992). Broadcasters and non-compete clauses: Win, lose or draw a lawsuit. In S. Lacy, A. Sohn, & R. H. Giles (Eds.), *Readings in Media Management* (pp. 55-72). Columbia, SC: AEJMC.

Collette, L., & Litman, B. R. (1997). The peculiar economics of new broadcast entry: The case of United Paramount and Warner Bros. *The Journal of Media Economics, 10*(4), 3-22.

Conner, K. R. (1991). A historical comparison of resource-based theory and five schools of thought within industrial organization economics: Do we have a new theory of the firm? *Journal of Management, 17*(1), 121-154.

David, P. A. (1985). Clio and the economics of QWERTY. *Economic History, 75*(2), 332-337.

Dertouzos, J. N., & Trautman, W. B. (1990). Economic effects of media concentration: Estimates from a model of the newspaper firm. *The Journal of Industrial Economics, 39*, 1-14.

Dierickx, I., & Cool, K. (1989). Asset stock accumulation and sustainability of competitive advantage. *Management Science, 35*(12), 1504-1511.

Dimmick, J. W., Patterson, S. J., & Albarran, A. B. (1992). Competition between the cable and broadcast industries: A niche analysis. *Journal of Media Economics, 5*(1), 13-29.

Ferguson, J. M. (1983). Daily newspaper advertising rates, local media cross-ownership, newspaper chains, and media competition. *Journal of Law & Economics, 26*, 635-654.

Golden, B. R. (1992). SBU strategy and performance: The moderating effects of the corporate-SBU relationship. *Strategic Management Journal, 13*, 145-158.

Govindarajan, V., & Fisher, J. (1990). Strategy, control systems and resource sharing: Effects on business unit performance. *Academy of Management Journal, 33*(2), 259-285.

Grant, A. E. (1994). The promise fulfilled? An empirical analysis of program diversity on television. *Journal of Media Economics, 7*(1), 51-64.

Hafstrand, H. (1995). Consumer magazines in transition: A study of approaches to internationalization. *Journal of Media Economics, 8*(1), 1-12.

Hawley, M. D. (1992). *Dropping the Paper: Losing Newspaper Loyalists at the Local Level* . University of Georgia: James M. Cox Institute for Newspaper Management Studies.

Heiner, R. A. (1983). The origin of predictable behavior. *The American Economic Review, 73*(4), 560-595.

Hickey, N. (1997, November/December). Will Gates crush newspapers? *Columbia Journalism Review*, 28-36.

Hill, C. W. L., Hitt, M. A., & Hoskisson, R. E. (1992). Cooperative versus competitive structures in related and unrelated diversified firms. *Organization Science, 3*(4), 501-521.

Hill, C. W. L., & Hoskisson, R. E. (1987). Strategy and structure in the multiproduct firm. *Academy of Management Review, 12*, 331-341.

Husini, S. A. (1988). Influences on the survival of new consumer magazines. *Journal of Media Economics, 1*(1), 39-49.

Itami, H. (1987). Chapters 1&2, *Mobilizing Invisible Assets* . Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Lacy, S. (1989). A model of demand for news: Impact of competition on newspaper content. *Journalism Quarterly, 66*(1), 40-48, 128.

Lacy, S. (1992). The financial commitment approach to news media competition. *Journal of Media Economics, 5*(2), 5-21.

Lacy, S., & Martin, H. J. (in press). High profits and declining circulation: A study of Thomson newspapers during the 1980s. *Newspaper Research Journal*.

Lacy, S., Shaver, M. A., & St. Cyr, C. (1996). The effects of public ownership and newspaper competition on the financial performance of newspaper corporations: A replication and extension. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 73*(2), 332-341.

Lacy, S., & Simon, T. F. (1993). *The economics and regulation of United States newspapers*. Norwood NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Litman, B. R. (February 1992). Economic aspects of program quality: The case for diversity. *Studies of Broadcasting*, 121-156.

Litman, B. R., & Bridges, J. (1986). An economic analysis of American newspapers. *Newspaper Research Journal, 7*(3), 9-26.

Litman, B. R., & Sochay, S. (1994). The emerging mass media environment. In R. E. Babe (Ed.), *Information and Communication in Economics* (pp. 233-269): Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

MacCrimmon, K. R. (1993). Do firm strategies exist? *Strategic Management Journal, 14*, 113-130.

Markides, C. C., & Williamson, P. J. (1994). Related diversification, core competencies and corporate performance. *Strategic Management Journal, 15*, 149-165.

Martin, H. J. (1997, Feb. 7-8). *Viewing Readers as a Resource: A Transaction Cost Approach to Studying Newspaper Behavior.* Paper presented at the Winter Regional Conference, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, St. Petersburg, FL.

McQuail, D. (1994). *Mass Communication Theory.* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Miller, I. R. (1997). Models for determining the economic value of cable television systems. *Journal of Media Economics, 10*(2), 21-33.

Owen, B. M., & Wildman, S. S. (1992). *Video economics.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Peteraf, M. A. (1993). The cornerstones of competitive advantage: A resource-based view. *Strategic Management Journal, 14*, 179-191.

Picard, R. G. (1989). *Media economics.* Newbury Park: SAGE.

Picard, R. G., Winter, J. P., McCombs, M. E., & Lacy, S. (Eds.). (1988). *Press Concentration and Monopoly: New Perspectives on Newspaper Ownership and Operation*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Ramstad, G. O. (1997). A model for structural analysis of the media market. *Journal of Media Economics, 10*(3), 45-50.

Robins, J., & Wiersema, M. F. (1995). A resource-based approach to the multibusiness firm: Empirical analysis of portfolio interrelationships and corporate financial performance. *Strategic Management Journal, 16*, 277-299.

Rumelt, R. P. (1984). Towards a strategic theory of the firm. In R. Lamb (Ed.), *Competitive Strategic Management* (pp. 556-570). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Rumelt, R. P., Schendel, D., & Teece, D. J. (1991). Strategic management and economics. *Strategic Management Journal, 12*, 5-29.

Scherer, F. M., & Ross, D. (1990). *Industrial Market Structure and Economic Performance*. (3rd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Thomas, L., & Litman, B. R. (1991). Fox Broadcasting Company, why now? An economic study of the rise of the fourth broadcast "network.". *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 35*(2), 139-157.

Wernerfelt, B. (1984). A resource-based view of the firm. *Strategic Management Journal, 5*, 171-180.

Wirth, M. O., & Bloch, H. (1995). Industrial organization theory and media industry analysis. *Journal of Media Econcmics, 8*(2), 15-26.

Youn, S.-M. (1994). Program type preference and program choice in a multichannel situation. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 38*(4), 465-475.

The impact of the expansion in the aftermarket on network prime time programs

Sora K. Park
PhD Candidate
Department of Communication Studies
Northwestern University

235 Arbor Glen Drive 105
East Lansing, MI 48823
517 332 4531
sora@nwu.edu

Media Management and Economics Division

The impact of the expansion in the aftermarket on network prime time programs

ABSTRACT

Utilizing the intertemporal intermedia flow model of television programs, this study explores how the growth in the syndication market has affected the network prime time programming decisions.

The regression results show that as the market for syndication grows the initial budget for network primetime shows have also grown as well as the deficits. Other factors that contribute to a program's "syndicatability" were also related to the size of initial budget and deficit level of network programs.

Introduction

The market for television programs has increased immensely over the past few decades. There has been an expansion in the market for television programs in terms of advertising revenues and the number of outlets for program exhibition. The main contributors are the local broadcast television and the cable market.

On the other hand, the traditional networks have suffered a decline in the share of viewing audience. Networks' share has decreased to under 60% of the viewing audience in prime time in the 1990s compared to over 90% in the 1970s. The revenue of the networks has not increased as much as other segments of the television program market (Table 1).

However, the budgets for primetime situation comedies have been increasing over the years, even after allowing for inflation. The deficit level of both dramas and comedies has increased considerably (Tables 2 and 3).

Producers of television programs make programs in anticipation of future profits from off-network syndication, cable and the international market for television programs.

The intertemporal-intermedia flow model of media products shows that there is a positive relation between the total market size and the budget of films and television programs (Wildman, 1994). As the total market for television programs grow, the budget and deficits gets larger accordingly. This increase is regardless whether or not an individual segment of the market grows or not. Thus the decrease in the network audience may be irrelevant to the size of the program budget.

Table 1 National advertising expenditure for television, 1977-1995
(in millions of standardized 1992 dollars)

	Network*	syndi -cation	cable/ national	cable/ local	spot/ national	spot/ local	TV Total	All media
1977	7,300	n/a	n/a	n/a	4,650	4,110	16,059	78,987
1978	7,794	n/a	n/a	n/a	5,112	4,653	17,559	84,961
1979	8,316	n/a	n/a	n/a	5,195	4,850	18,362	88,210
1980	8,493	83	83	13	5,412	4,912	18,914	88,659
1981	8,460	114	159	26	5,684	5,111	19,554	91,700
1982	8,859	214	278	46	6,225	5,371	20,993	94,979
1983	9,599	410	415	68	6,603	5,944	23,040	103,762
1984	11,233	553	648	105	7,231	6,698	26,350	115,705
1985	10,281	663	758	166	7,658	7,288	26,814	120,855
1986	10,350	744	839	222	8,151	8,082	28,388	126,725
1987	10,229	917	915	244	8,238	8,223	28,765	131,949
1988	10,653	1,046	1,094	295	8,301	8,444	29,833	127,816
1989	10,156	1,436	1,334	368	8,198	8,486	29,979	138,161
1990	10,025	1,698	1,488	423	8,321	8,393	30,347	137,436
1991	9,181	1,904	1,563	432	7,307	7,775	28,162	129,908
1992	10,249	1,370	1,685	475	7,551	8,079	29,409	131,290
1993	10,038	1,536	1,920	579	7,602	8,221	29,809	134,581
1994	10,431	1,653	2,213	680	8,573	9,022	32,571	143,022
1995	10,781	1,874	2,481	796	8,475	9,280	33,686	149,554

Note: Data taken from Television and Cable Factbook (Cable services company, Inc., 1988-1997), values are deflated[1] into 1992 dollars
*Beginning with 1992, figure includes FOX, beginning with 1995 figure includes UPN and WB.

Table 2 Average budget and price for prime time programs, 1986-1992[2]

	Average license fee	Average Budget*	Average Deficit %*
1986	512,019	566,842	9.42
1987	508,738	526,972	3.13
1988	577,029	690,471	16.29
1989	544,593	651,059	16.33
1990	544,256	667,530	18.61
1991	587,990	665,759	16.49
1992	557,932	658,678	16.22

*mean difference significant at $p<0.01$

---

[1] The GDP price deflator was used to calculated the deflated dollar values for all shows.

[2] (1)The license fee and budget for all programs are per 30 minutes of program standardized into 1992 US dollars.
(2)For Tables 2 and 3, Cheers (1991) with deficit of -185% was excluded since it may distort the mean.

Table 3 Average budget and price for dramas and sitcoms, 1986-1992

	Situation comedies			Dramas		
	License fee	Budget	Deficit %	License fee	Budget	Deficit %
1986	523,806	543,579	3.92	504,162	582,351	13.08
1987	486,935	498,861	2.04	524,391	547,153	3.91
1988	573,945	670,741	13.97	580,220	710,882	18.69
1989	533,104	630,497	15.48	558,855	676,585	17.40
1990	560,892	666,242	15.86	523,604	669,128	22.02
1991	564,601	664,706	14.78	523,039	651,173	19.51
1992	604,667	693,750	13.19	484,783	603,783	19.26

Wildman and Robinson(1995)'s economic model shows that there is a clear link between the syndication market and the networks' choice among the options they have for primetime programs. The increase in the demand for sitcoms in the off-network syndication market resulted in the increase of sitcoms on network television. The model also shows that the off-network syndication market influences the timing of network program cancellation.

In fact the average budgets of sitcoms have increased consistently, whereas the budget of dramas have not increased. The per hour budget of sitcoms exceeded the per hour budget of dramas since 1991 (Table 3).

Similarly, Waterman and Grant (1991) observed an increase in average production budgets of fictional program types on the major television networks that are most frequently repeated on cable channels.

In this paper I explore how the total size of television program market affects the initial program production budget and the factors determining the deficit level of programs.

Literature Review

The syndication marketplace has been growing substantially during the past decade. For advertisers, syndication sometimes serves as an alternative to network prime time. Although, syndication is closely linked with network television in several ways, it has been rarely studied by scholars. A few studies indicate the importance of syndication in the television programming environment.

Chan-Olmsted(1991), used the structure-conduct-performance model to analyze the market for syndicated programs in the 1980s, focusing on the economic and regulatory environment of the syndication marketplace. She examines how the regulatory environment of the television syndication industry influenced the market structure and conduct. She found that the concentration in the syndication market has increased during the past decade and projects that the concentration will continues to increase.

In another study, Chan-Olmsted (1990) calculated the concentration ratio of first run syndication market and off-network syndication market. Both were steadily gearing towards concentration, the first run market being more so. But still, the syndication industry is not highly concentrated.

Fletcher (1993) analyzed the important assets of programs in order to be syndicated. The principal frame of mind value for off-network series is the popularity of the series during the network run and the "star" values of featured performers. Especially ratings across demographic groups are the most important factor.

Scholars have studies the syndication market for television programs by the way it has links to network broadcast television. Economic models show that the syndication market, including the domestic off-network syndication, cable television and the international market, serve as aftermarkets for network shows.

The public good characteristics of television programs and movies are utilized well by the practice of windowing (Owen & Wildman, 1992). Wildman's study (1994) on intertemporal intermedia flow shows that mass media products flow in one direction among distribution channels over time. This sequential release strategy can be explained in terms of commercial responses to differences among audiences in their demands for public goods. Windowing in motion picture and television industries is the most studied sequential release strategies for media products. The release in each sequences is generally exclusive to that window during a limited time. This is to maximize the sum of profits realized from the audience as a whole. People have different preferences and are willing to pay different prices for a certain media product. Media sellers take the advantage of selling the product to high-value audiences first. Usually the budget of a television program or movie is determined by which entry point it chooses from the downstream windows, anticipating the aggregate revenues.

Robinson (1993) examined the factors that influence the success of a program in the off-network syndication marketplace. Her empirical study shows certain program characteristics and market characteristics determine the program's success in syndication. In another study, Robinson (1996) provides an extensive historical and empirical examination of the syndication industry. There has been a tremendous growth in the outlets for syndicated programs such as independent television stations and cable networks during the past few decades. Syndication market has become a significant downstream window for network television programs as well as a unique market in and of itself.

Robinson explores the links between network broadcast and syndication performance of off-network syndicated television shows and found that previous network program performances as measured by ratings and the cumulated number of episodes predicted the syndication performance very well. However, genre, market competition and availability of time slots explain the performance of first-run syndicated programs better. She also tested an empirical model of the relationship between time slot availability in local markets and the number of programs in syndication. For first-run shows the availability was highly correlated with the program in syndication whereas for off-network shows there wasn't such a correlation.

Wildman & Robinson (1995) created a network producer bargaining model which shows that programs that do well in syndication is favored by the networks in programming. With this they suggest that the growing syndication market contributed to the demise of prime time game shows in the 1970s and the rise of sit-coms during the 1970s and 1980s. Thus syndication affects the types of programs that the networks will exhibit during prime time. Also the timing of series cancellation can be explained largely by the value a program has in the syndication marketplace. Their economic model shows how the syndication aftermarket for network programs influence the timing of series cancellations. The declining marginal contributions of new episodes to a series' value in syndication reduce the profit generated for both network and producers and can eventually lead to its cancellation though its ratings remain high. Off-network series in syndication are usually stripped daily which means a year's worth of network episodes lasts about a month in syndication without repetition. Viewers are easily tired by repeated episodes and thus each additional episodes increase the value of a program in syndication. The marginal value, however, while always positive falls as the number of episodes increases. As the number of episodes increases and the contribution of a new episode to a series' syndication value falls, the minimum license fee acceptable from a network will rise and eventually the network's margin on the continuing series will decline to the point where a new series will be financially more attractive.

Waterman and Grant (1992) did a study on the link between the cable and movie/television program markets. They analyzed 22 national cable broadcast network programming for types, origins and viewership of programs. Results show that cable networks are predominantly serving as an aftermarket for theatrical movies and network television programs both in amount of programming and viewership. Cable television's dominant production role has essentially become that of a coproducer of programs created with the intention of serving audiences in a variety of media over time. The marginal productivity of increasing budgets of broad appeal programs is greater for cable networks than the productivity of creating new, narrower focused programs.

Noll, Peck & McNowan (1973) analyzed the effects of market structure on the quantity and prices of syndicated programs. The market structure will affect neither the total amount of broadcasting nor its composition although it will influence the price structure and decision of rents. In a perfectly competitive syndication industry with free entry, a broadcaster will take all of the quasi-rent attributable to the differential audience attractiveness of the programming and the syndicators will only incur their residual charges and distribution costs regardless of the station's revenue. On the other hand, if the syndication industry is monopolistic then the syndicators will take the quasi-rent. In reality, both the syndication and broadcasting are oligopolistic with broadcasting industry being more so. As a result, the quasi-rent goes to either the broadcaster or the syndication depending on who has more market power. Their regression analysis reveal that the price of syndicated programs show that stations in the smaller markets pay most of their broadcast revenue for programming while those in the larger markets give up only a small portion of revenue for purchase programming.

Studies on the link between the network program market and the syndication market indicate that (1) the syndication market is growing substantially, (2) syndication market growth does not necessarily mean more competition in the network program market and (3) network prime time shows are influenced in various ways by the aftermarket of the shows, since most of the profits from the shows are collected in the syndication market.

An empirical model

The revenues from all distribution channels determine the total budget of a television program. Thus the increase in the expected revenues from future windows raise initial network budgets.

If the program industry is competitive, revenues will just cover costs incurred on average when the market is in equilibrium. Expected revenues from all windows will cover costs for new programs. Revenues generated from only one window will show that the producers are operating at a loss. In other words, the expansion in the total market will also raise the deficit level at the initial stage of distribution higher. This is true as long as the original window, i.e. the network market, becomes a smaller fraction of the total market.

Prime time television series are syndicated after or during network runs. Situation comedies are usually syndicated on local broadcast television and the cable networks. Dramas are usually syndicated on the cable networks and in the international market.

The sizes of these aftermarkets are important factors in determining the budget, deficit level and the type of programs that are to be produced for network prime time as well as the timing of cancellation.

To further explore Wildman & Robinson (1995)'s analysis of the impact of the aftermarket on network programs, I analyze the factors contributing to the network prime time program budgets and deficit levels.

Network primetime series are usually produced at a financial deficit. That is, the license fees the networks pay do not cover the total costs of production. Producers must recoup the costs and gain profits from the off-network broadcast syndication, cable television and the international markets. In order to be profitable, a program that is originally broadcast on the networks must be syndicated for off-network reruns in other distribution channels.

The deficits at the time of network exhibition are determined by several factors including the future possibility of syndication. The producers of network programs must take into consideration all earnings from downstream windows when producing a program. Producers of programs that may be shown in several distribution channels are competing in each of those channels. Producers adjust to the competitive environment with new strategies in order to increase the likelihood of selling the program in the aftermarket. For instance, increased syndication demand for half-hour off-network sitcoms and declining demand for hour dramas contributed to the increase in the situation comedy on the networks (Owen & Wildman, 1992:40).

For the networks, the syndication market growth may seem like more competition. In fact, due to cable services and the increase of independent stations, the network audience share has decreased significantly. The networks have to invest more in programming and air more expensive shows in order to maximize profits. However, the license fee paid for network programs have not increased accordingly. This means the deficit percentage of network programs is getting proportionately larger to the total budget.

As a consequence of the growth in the syndication market, network programs have more outlets to be syndicated after the initial network exhibition. For the producers, it is profitable to invest more in a network program, if that guarantees future syndication.

The likelihood of syndication in the future for a program can be increased in two ways. First, the market for syndication may expand resulting in a higher demand for off-network programs. Second, since some programs have an advantage over others in syndication, certain program characteristics may be chosen at the time of production in order to increase the likelihood of off-network syndication. These two aspects of a program are complementary in the sense that as the market for syndication grows producers will be more willing to gear their efforts towards producing a program that is valued in syndication.

The models to be tested in this study can be expressed as follows;

Model 1: $B = f(S_i, P_i)$

Model 2: $D = g(S_i, X_i)$

B is the budget of network prime time series
S_i is the size of the total market for television series
P_i is a set of exogenous variables, the type of producer and the number of years the program has been on the networks
D is the proportion of the deficit to the budget
X_i is the likelihood of syndication of the program reflected in number of episodes accumulated, the expected performance on the networks, type of producer and the type of program

Data and variables

The database

Primetime network television series that appear on the fall schedule of 1986 to 1992 on ABC, CBS and NBC were included. Since the study focuses on the windowing practices of television program distributors, only regularly scheduled prime time network series (dramas and sitcoms) were included. This resulted in 465 cases of observation. Unless otherwise noted, all programs were treated as separate cases for each year of network exhibition. So for example, programs with a history of 4 years during the 7 years of observation would be counted as 4 separate cases.

Prime time program price (license fee), budget and the supplier data were obtained from various issues of *Channels* (1986-1990), *Variety* (1990-1992) and *The International Television and Video Almanac* (New York: Quigley Publishing, 1987-1993). For the ratings across 52 weeks of each year, I consulted Nielsen Media Research, *Year-end report on network prime time programs* (1986 - 1996) and Nielsen Media Research, *Nielsen Television Index Prime evening season ranking* (1986 - 1996) sheets. The number of cumulated episodes at the end of each season was obtained from *Television Programming Source Books (1996)*. The years on the network, genre, broadcast network and other program characteristics were obtained from *Brooks & Marsh (1995)*.

Variables

MAJSTU

To see if production by a major studio has an effect, the dummy variable MAJSTU was included in the analysis. Lorimar TV, Warner Brothers Television, Columbia Pictures Television (Embassy and TriStar), Paramount Network Television, Universal Television (MCA TV), Twentieth Television Corporation, Disney (Touchstone TV, Buena Vista) were coded as 1, all others as 0. The way that the major studios were determined is somewhat consistent with Owen & Wildman's (1992) classification. The market share of each producer was accounted for. These producers supplied 40% of all prime time series during the years 1986 to 1993. For companies that merged within the years of analysis, each party was counted as separate entities until the merger occurred. But this does not affect the analysis since mergers occurred only within the traditional majors during the years of analysis.

For shows with co-producers, I assumed the major to be the most influential party and counted the program as a major production. So if any program had one of the 8 producers involved the program was counted as a "major studio production".

LF92

For each program, a standardized license fee (LF92) in thousands of dollars per 30 minutes of each episode was calculated. As reported in the 1997 Economic Report of the President, the Gross Domestic Product deflator was used as a price deflator for each year, with 1992 as the standard year.

Table 4 Gross Domestic Product Price deflator

Year	Deflator
1977	47.4
1978	51.0
1979	55.3
1980	60.4
1981	65.9
1982	70.1
1983	73.1
1984	75.9
1985	78.4
1986	80.6
1987	83.1
1988	86.1
1989	89.7
1990	93.6
1991	97.3
1992	100
1993	102.6
1994	104.9
1995	107.6

Then programs that were longer than 30 minutes were adjusted so that for every case a comparison could be made on price per 30 minutes. So all the prices for each program in this analysis are based upon 30 minutes of programming in thousands of 1992 standard U.S. dollars unless otherwise noted.

PC92

Similarly, a standard production cost per program, PC92, was estimated by dividing actual budget by the deflator and then calculating per 30 minute cost in thousands of dollars.

DEFPER

The percentage of deficit to a program's budget was calculated by dividing deficit by the budget and multiplying by 100, i.e., (BUDGET-LICENSE FEE)/BUDGET * 100). For cases with higher license fee than budget the value has a negative sign. There were only two cases throughout the seven years of observation; Cheers (1991) and Perfect Strangers (1987).

Table 5 Cases of negative deficit percentage

Program	Year	Budget	Lic fee	Deficit	DEFPER
Cheers	1991	$1,000,000	$2,850,000	-$1,850,000	-185
Perfect Strangers	1987	$300,000	$390,000	-$90,000	-30

EPISODES

This is a variable representing the total number of episodes for a series cumulated at the end of each season.

EPISQ

The variable EPISQ is the squared term of EPISODES. This variable was included to allow for the possibility that relationship between the number of episodes and the renewal probability was nonlinear. Previous work (Wildman & Robinson, 1995) further suggests that as the number of episodes increase the probability of renewal will also increase initially but at a declining rate and eventually the probability of renewal will decrease.

DRAMA

Only regularly scheduled series, i.e., dramas and sitcoms are included in this study. DRAMA is a dummy variable that represents the genre of the program. Dramas are all coded as 1 and comedies are coded as 0. Certain genres may be more valuable in syndication markets and thus producers may have a different valuation towards certain genres. Genre is also related to the length of a program, which is another factor contributing to the syndication value of a program.

STANDRAT

A variable for ratings was calculated as the average ratings across 52 weeks of each year. Programs that didn't last the 52 weeks were averaged within the weeks they lasted. The mean ratings declined over the years, as is the general trend in network broadcasting. So, in order to make the rating points comparable throughout the years, each rating point was divided by each year's audience share of the three networks combined. Standardization of the ratings data was necessary because of decline in the networks' audience share.

Table 6 The share of the three networks

TV Season	ABC	CBS	NBC	Total Share
1976-77	32	29	29	90
1977-78	32	29	28	89
1978-79	33	30	27	90
1979-80	30	30	27	87
1980-81	28	30	27	85
1981-82	28	29	24	81
1982-83	27	28	24	79
1983-84	27	27	23	77
1984-85	24	26	25	75
1985-86	23	25	27	75
1986-87	22	23	27	72
1987-88	21	21	25	67
1988-89	21	21	26	68
1989-90	20	21	24	65
1990-91	21	21	21	63
1991-92	23	20	20	63
1992-93	22	20	18	60

Source: Nielsen Media Research (1988) Prime time 3 network ratings, Broadcasting and Cable (various issues)

EXPRAT

This variable represents the expected ratings of a show. The variable EXPRAT was estimated by regressing STANDRAT on PC92, GENRE and MAJSTU for new shows. For shows with a previous record of ratings I used the former year's STANDRAT as a proxy for EXPRAT.

ADREVNET

ADREVNET is the advertising revenue for the networks for each year. For the years 1996 to 1991, the figures include only the big three, ABC, CBS and NBC. From 1992, the figures include FOX also. The variable is the total advertising volume in the network market standardized into millions of 1992 dollars.

ADREVSYN

This is the total advertising volume in the domestic syndication market for each year, standardized into 100 millions of 1992 dollars.

CABCOST

Similar to CABREV, the total programming cost of the basic cable networks was used. The value is standardized into 100 millions of 1992 dollars.

Table 7 Summary of variables

Variables	Description
DEFPER	% of deficit, [(BUDGET-LICENSE FEE)/BUDGET] * 100
EPISODES	Total number of episodes at the end of season
EPISQ	Squared term of EPISODES
ADREVNET	Network advertising revenues (100 millions $)
ADREVSYN	Broadcast syndication advertising revenues (100 millions $)
CABCOST	Basic cable total programming expenditures (100 millions $)
LF92*	License fee for the season
PC92*	Budget for the season
EXPRAT	Expected ratings for the year
AVERAT	Average ratings while on the networks
YRSONAIR	Number of years on the networks
DRAMA	Drama=1 sitcoms=0
CABLE	Syndication on local broadcast stations=0, on cable=1
CAB_DRA	DRAMA * CABLE
MAJSTU	Major studio production=1 non major production=0

* values are standardized into thousands of 1992 dollars per half hour of program

Descriptive analysis of data

As shown in Table 3, the average license fees and budgets for sitcoms have an increasing trend and eventually exceed that for dramas in the 1990s. The overall average license fees and budgets for the years 1986 to 1992 are higher for comedies than for dramas. The deficits for dramas were greater than for comedies. The license fees, budgets and deficit levels were slightly higher for major studio shows but were all statistically insignificant. Renewed shows and returning shows tend to have higher license fees and budgets (Table 8).

Table 8 Average license fee, budget and deficit level of programs

	License fee	Budget	Deficit %
Comedy	564,567*	636,921	11.41**
Drama	530,388	631,638	15.51
Major	554,217	638,517	13.35
Non Major	534,142	624,025	13.26
Renewed shows	565,006*	647,867*	12.92
Canceled shows	524,000	614,367	13.93
New shows	493,315**	583,832**	14.38
Returning shows	581,618	664,705	12.70

* mean differences statistically significant at $p<0.05$, ** at $p<0.01$

Both the license fee and budget increase each year as a program gets renewed. On the other hand, the deficit percentage is quite steady during the first four years of exhibition. There is no deficit for shows that last more than 10 years (Table 9).

Table 9 Average license fee, budget and deficit level by years on the networks[3]

Year on air	License fee*	Budget*	Deficit %*	# of cases
1	493,315	583,832	14.38	156
2	506,385	599,537	14.53	74
3	519,993	612,242	14.39	52
4	558,441	654,910	14.54	42
5	590,337	707,044	16.19	29
6	614,117	706,571	12.46	22
7	636,745	741,550	14.00	15
8	689,617	748,367	7.73	10
9	754,737	799,259	5.55	6
10 or more	1,002,780	876,024	-12.33	11

* mean differences significant at $p<0.01$

The number of dramas and sitcoms appearing on network prime time has also changed during the 1980s and early 1990s. The number of comedies has increased considerably, whereas the number of dramas has decreased (Table 10).

Table 10 Number of programs on network prime time by program type

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Comedies	28	30	34	39	40	41	36
Dramas	35	40	34	30	31	22	23
Total	63	70	68	69	71	63	59

The correlation table (Table 11) shows that the license fee is highly correlated to budget and negatively correlated to deficit percentage. Shows that have higher license fee have less deficit percentage. The deficit percentage is negatively correlated to the number of episodes accumulated.

---

[3] The deficit percentage for shows lasting 10 years or more includes *Cheers* (1991) with the license fee exceeding the budget (-185%), which is quite an exceptional case. Most programs reach the level of no deficits but rarely receive more license fee than the production costs.

Table 11 Correlation table of license fee, budget, deficit level and ratings

	Budget	Def %	Ratings	Episodes
License fee	.7601	-.5792	.2319	.5209
Budget	-	.0675*	.1625	.4735
Deficit Percentage	-	-	-.1899	-.2659
Ratings	-	-	-	.3499

* p=.169, all others are significant at p<.001

Although there was little difference in the license fees and budgets between major studio shows and non-major studio shows the performance of major studios' shows was better. The average ratings were higher which resulted in a higher renewal rate and longer exhibition on the networks. Comedies perform better in terms of average ratings and get renewed more than dramas but have a shorter life on the networks (Table 12).

Table 12 The performance of network prime time series

	Average years on air*	Average ratings	Renewal rate of all shows(%)	Renewal rate of new shows(%)
Non major programs	3.96	18.34	56.0	33.3
Major studio programs	4.84	18.51	61.2	39.7
Dramas	4.43	16.45	54.0	34.9
Comedies	4.71	20.23	64.1	40.2
All programs	4.58	18.46	59.4	37.7

*Does not include shows that are still on the air as of 1998 which could have distorted the results.

Regression results

Model 1

Network programs are risky investments, especially in the initial stage and producers are willing to bear the risk only if they anticipate future returns. The network license fees does not cover all the costs of program production and producers make programs geared towards the off-network syndication market in order to recoup all the costs from other markets. Thus the budget for programs will be determined by the size of the total market for television series even though programs are produced initially for network exhibition.

The size of the network market and the off-network syndication market, both broadcast and cable, are included in the analysis since a television series is produced with these markets in mind. The larger each market becomes, the larger should be the budget, because higher budgeted programs have a tendency to attract more audiences and thus more revenues.

The size of the network market (ADREVNET) and off-network broadcast syndication market (ADREVSYN) was each assumed to be proportional to the total advertising expenditures in each market for each year. For the off-network cable market the total programming costs of basic cable networks (CABCOST) was used as a proxy of the size of the off-network cable program market. This includes the programming costs of all basic cable networks.

Since different types of programs are preferred in different syndication markets, a dummy variable representing the genre of the program (DRAMA) was included. To see if the effect on the budget of dramas and comedies is different depending on market of concern, an interaction term CAB_DRAM representing CABCOST multiplied by DRAMA was also included.

Major studios may find it easier to finance programs of investing more in a program than smaller producers. Also they may be better bearers of risk which may affect the program budgets. A dummy variable representing the type of producer (MAJSTU) was included to test for these hypotheses.

To account for the possibility that the budgets increased annually at renewal, the number of years the program was on the networks (YRSTONOW) was also included as a predictor variable for budget.

Model 2

How much deficits a producer is willing to accept is a function of the total market size and the likelihood of syndication of the program. In other words, the proportion of deficit (DEFPER) for a network program is a function of the anticipated aftermarket revenues and the syndicatability of the program. Increase in the anticipated aftermarket revenues should increase the tolerance for deficits.

The program characteristics that are hypothesized to increase the likelihood of syndication include the number of episodes the program accumulated during its network run, the expected performance on network television, the genre being a sitcom or drama and identity of the producer.

The cumulated number of episodes (EPISODES) indicates how much value a program has in syndication and thus the deficit level the producer is willing to accept. Once the program accumulates enough episodes to be syndicated, the producers have more bargaining power about the deficit level of the program since they no longer need to air the shows on the networks to get syndicated. The squared term of EPISODES (EPISQ) is also included in the regression model to account for the declining marginal contribution of additional episodes to the value of syndication of a program.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A program's expected performance is reflected in the license fees the networks pay for the show. License fee is determined by how many viewers the program is expected to attract. Thus, the networks pay higher license fees for shows that are expected to perform better. The average license fees while on the networks (AVELF) was included to test for the effect of network license fees.

A dummy variable DRAMA representing the genre is included to test for any differences in drama and comedies. Sitcoms are preferred in the off-network local broadcast market and dramas in cable and the international market.

Major studios are believed to be better able to bear risk than smaller producers are. The majors are more willing to withhold the returns from their program. A dummy variable, MAJSTU was also included to test for any differences between the type of producer.

Results

To test the models, two sets of OLS regression equations were set up and estimated. For the first model, I regressed the budget of network programs (PC92) on ADREVNET, ADREVSYN, CABCOST, YRSTONOW, MAJSTU, DRAMA and CAB_DRAM. I included the interaction term, CAB_DRAM, to account for any interaction between CABCOST and DRAMA. Then separate regression equations was estimated for dramas and comedies to compare the varying effects of each independent variable.

The regression results in Table 13 show that the size of the total network market, the size of the syndication market and the cable programming costs are all good predictors of the budget of a network program. All variables have a positive effect on the budget, meaning that as the market size grows, the initial budget for network programs increases accordingly.

The overall budgets for dramas were higher than budgets for sitcoms. Contrary to major studio advantage hypothesis, major studio programs did not have higher budgets. The number of years on the networks had a positive impact on the budget. The longer the shows are aired on the networks, the higher the budget.

The interaction term CAB_DRAM was significant with a negative coefficient. Dramas are less effected by the growth in the cable program market than sitcoms. This result is counter intuitive since dramas are favored in the cable market. Further analysis is outlined in the next set of regressions.

The model explained 36% of the variation of the dependent variable (PC92). The relatively low R square may be because the actual program budget depends on several different factors that are not directly related to the program market characteristics, such as the starring actors and type of technology used for shooting which are factors that are not measurable.

To further explore the different impact of market growth on dramas and comedies, separate regression equations was estimated (Table 14). The advantage of estimating separate equations is that the degree of effect of each independent variable can be compared.

For both dramas and comedies, the size of the network market and broadcast syndication market had positive effects on the budget. However, for dramas, the network and broadcast syndication market growth had a larger effect than for comedies. The cable market growth had a positive effect on sitcom budgets but had a negative effect on drama budgets. There is a trend in the cable networks to expand the programming to reach a wider audience as the average viewership of cable channels increases (Paul Kagan Associates, 1994). As a result, cable programming is becoming more like broadcast programming, raising the demand for sitcoms at a higher rate than for dramas.

The years a program was on the networks also had a larger impact on comedies. This means that sitcom budgets increase at a higher rate at renewal compared to dramas.

Table 13 Predicting budget of primetime programs
(Dependent variable is PC92)

Variable	B	Significance
ADREVNET	13.197395	.0000
ADREVSYN	21.211409	.0000
CABCOST	4.213991	.0756
DRAMA	95.138851	.0037
MAJSTU	-9.044885	.4916
YRSTNOW	29.315334	.0000
CAB_DRAM	-7.932759	.0014
(Constant)	-1118.332488	.0000
Multiple R	.60641	
R Square	.36773	
Adjusted R Square	.35688	

Table 14 Predicting budget of dramas and comedies
(Dependent variable is PC92)

Variable	dramas		comedies	
	b	sig	b	sig
ADREVNET	14.591479	.0000	11.677844	.0005
ADREVSYN	27.596677	.0000	15.730026	.0044
CABCOST	-7.570614	.0045	6.714752	.0320
MAJSTU	-.383197	.9792	-11.165197	.5906
YRSTNOW	20.627124	.0000	42.350831	.0000
(Constant)	-1179.221163	.0001	-958.478098	.0131
Multiple R	.63972		.63405	
R Square	.40925		.40202	
Adj. R^2	.39354		.38817	

The second model was estimated with two-stage least squares method. The model tested here includes a simultaneous equation with two dependent variables that are independent variables for each other.

Because the relationship between the deficit percentage of a show (DEFPER) and the license fee for the show (LF92) is reciprocal the error terms are not independent of all the independent variables.

Two-stage least squares equation first applies ordinary least squares to obtain the predicted dependent variables. Then the predicted values are used instead of actual values for the final equations. The error terms are no longer correlated with the dependent variables and the specification problem is now solved.

For the model predicting deficit percentages, three separate two-stage least squares regressions were estimated; one for all shows, another for new shows and the third for returning shows. New shows have no previous record of performance such as ratings and the cumulated number of episodes, which are important factors in determining the deficits and license fees. The difference in the amount of information available to predict a program's performance may be an important factor in determining deficits. To account for any difference separate regression equations for new shows and existing shows were estimated.

The results in Table 15 show that for all network programs, the network revenue (ADREVNET) and off-network syndication broadcast revenues (ADREVSYN) are good predictors of deficit level. The cable industry programming costs variable (CABCOST) was insignificant at $p<0.1$ but had a positive sign. The major effect is the growth of the off-network broadcast syndication market.

The increase in the market for off-network syndicated programs shifted the deficit level higher because producers produce programs in anticipation of future profits from downstream windows and therefore are willing to accept lower payments for the network run. The increase in the demand for off-network programs increases the possibility of future syndication of network programs.

Increase in the syndicatability of shows also increased the deficit level. The number of episodes and genre had a positive impact on the deficit level. The squared term of episodes (EPISQ) also was significant with a negative sign. The effect of the number of episodes has a curvilinear effect on the deficit level. This means as additional episodes contribute less to the syndicatability at the margin as the number of episodes increase. Having more episodes has a positive effect on the deficit level but at a decreasing rate. For the first few years, each additional episode means another step toward syndication and producers are willing to accept a greater deficit level. Once the program has enough episodes accumulated for syndication, the producers need not accept the high deficit since an additional episode does not make much of a difference in getting the program in the syndication market.

Dramas had larger percentage of deficit to the program budget than comedies. Since sitcoms have more syndication value than dramas it seems logical that the deficit level the producers tolerate should be larger for sitcoms but the result was the opposite. Although it is not explicit in the analysis due to the lack of data, the growth of international market and the preference of the broadcast networks for sitcoms may partially explain the differences in the deficit level of dramas and comedies.

The license fee of shows (LF92) had a negative impact on the dependent variable and was statistically significant at $p<0.5$. Programs with higher license fees have less deficit level. Shows with higher license fee are expected to perform better to begin with since the license fee is paid according to the shows' expected ability to attract viewers.

However, there is no difference in the type of producer in the level of deficit. The MAJSTU variable was insignificant. This may be due to the fact that being a major studio production increases the value of the program only at the initial stage and in its first year. A further analysis of differences between first year programs and returning programs are outlined in the next set of regressions.

The model predicted 41% of the variation in the dependent variable DEFPER and 33% of LF92.

The two-stage least squares results for new shows exhibited on network prime time (Table 16) are different from the results for renewed shows (Table 17). For new shows, the size of the network had a positive effect on the deficit level. The higher demand for off-network shows resulted in a larger deficit level for programs. ADREVSYN and CABCOST were insignificant but have positive signs, which is in the predicted direction. New shows are more affected by the network program market than future markets.

Rather than any changes in the total market for television programs, the characteristics of the program itself had more significant effect on the deficit percentage of the show. Being a drama and a major studio programs was important in determining the deficit level of new programs. Dramas and major studio programs have higher deficit levels. Programs with higher license fee have lower deficit percentage since the networks pay more for shows that will perform better. Higher budgeted programs have a higher deficit percentage in proportion to the total budget and on average major studio shows have a higher budget in the case of new shows.

The R square for the model predicting deficit percentage was 25%, which is lower than the explained variation of the model for all shows. Having little information on the program's future performance reduces the prediction level.

For shows that have lasted more than one year on the networks (Table 17), the model has a higher R square of 41%.

The network revenues and off-network broadcast syndication revenues are both significant and positive. As with first year programs, the market size of the network and broadcast syndication are important predictors of the size of deficits. CABCOST is an insignificant predictor for the deficit level of existing shows.

The likelihood of syndication reflected in the number of episodes has a positive impact on the deficit level. The increase in the syndicatability of a show allows the producers to accept greater deficit levels but again at a decreasing rate since the EPISQ variable has a negative sign. Contrary to results for the new shows, there is no difference in the deficit levels of major studio productions and non-major studio productions.

DRAMA is significant and positive. As with first year shows, dramas have significantly higher deficit level. The networks consistently prefer comedies to dramas and pay higher license fee in proportion to production costs of a program.

The license fee variable had a negative impact on the deficit levels as with new shows. This is because the networks compensate greater expected performance in terms of higher license fees. Shows that are expected to perform better have higher license fee in proportion to the production budget.

Table 15 Statistical results of the model determining the deficit percentage for all shows

	Dependent variable			
	DEFPER		LF92	
	B	Sig	B	sig
LF92	-.0518	.0267		
DEFPER			-14.6683	.0000
ADREVNET	1.7986	.0000	27.1026	.0000
ADREVSYN	2.5385	.0000	38.9221	.0000
CABCOST	.3025	.2062	7.0292	.0466
DRAMA	4.2335	.0020	78.6196	.0000
EPISODES	.0995	.0013		
EPISQ	-.0003	.0006		
MAJSTU	.3827	.7592		
EXPRAT			8.2631	.0000
(Constant)	-184.4283	.0000	-2800.7660	.0000
R^2	.42384		.33882	
Adj R^2	.40911		.32622	
S.E.	9.15819		145.97439	

Table 16 Statistical results of the model determining the deficit percentage of programs for new shows

	Dependent variable			
	DEFPER		LF92	
	B	sig	B	sig
LF92	.0704	.0751		
DEFPER			2.3343	.5273
ADREVNET	.9494	.0315	2.1807	.7152
ADREVSYN	1.2006	.1756	9.2476	.3599
CABCOST	.3243	.3060	-3.7356	.1548
DRAMA	5.3103	.0028	-80.8219	.0041
MAJSTU	3.8773	.0319		
EXPRAT			-19.3524	.0136
(Constant)	-142.1098	.0007	494.4212	.4709
R^2	.28511		.17743	
Adj R^2	.25512		.14292	
S.E.	10.01735		88.78678	

Table 17 Statistical results of the model determining the deficit percentage of programs for returning shows

	Dependent variable			
	DEFPER		LF92	
	B	sig	B	sig
LF92	-.0515	.0192		
DEFPER			-15.7298	.0000
ADREVNET	1.5434	.0000	23.1919	.0001
ADREVSYN	2.0874	.0003	30.8005	.0023
CABCOST	.2707	.4648	8.0222	.1493
DRAMA	4.1632	.0408	64.0983	.0178
EPISODES	.1028	.0359		
EPISQ	-.0003	.0079		
MAJSTU	-.4070	.8221		
EXPRAT			4.7280	.1279
(Constant)	-151.8747	.0002	-2197.3139	.0011
R^2	.43692		.36618	
Adj R^2	.41190		.34528	
S.E.	10.11356		164.65239	

Discussion

This paper is an empirical assessment of the intertemporal intermedia flow of information products, in which the size of the total market determines the initial program budget and price.

The producer's decision to make a show for network exhibition relies on several factors including the anticipated profits from the future markets. The growth in the syndication market drove up the budget of network programs, especially for sitcoms, which are the most favored genre in the off-network syndication market.

Both the size of the syndication market and the likelihood of syndication of the program determine a program's deficit level.

The first model predicting budget has straightforward results. The budget is determined by the size of the network, off-network syndication broadcast and cable market. Producers can produce higher budgeted shows anticipating future sales of programs to the downstream windows for television programs. The cable market had a different impact on dramas and comedies. With the increased penetration and higher ratings of cable networks, the programming increasingly resembles that of the broadcast television raising the demand for off-network sitcoms.

The second model, predicting deficit levels yielded more complicated results since the networks' preference is another important factor in determining deficit levels. This is not separate from the factors that determine a program's syndication likelihood. The results show that networks have certain preferences for program type. For instance, half hour comedies are more valued since they are easier to schedule and have better ratings than dramas.

Although the network and syndication market size were good predictors of deficit level of all shows, there is a certain difference in the factors determining the deficits of new shows and returning shows.

New shows are more sensitive to the change in size of the network and syndication market. Compared to returning shows, the deficit level of new shows increases more at the same unit of change in the network or syndication market.

Another difference is that for new shows, being a major studio production shifts the deficit level up whereas for returning shows, major studio shows are not much different from non-major studio shows. Major studio shows have a higher budget at the initial stage and therefore higher deficit percentages.

The model predicting deficits for returning shows was more satisfactory in terms of predicting power. This is because shows that have lasted more than a year have more information on the syndicatability of the program. This is reflected in the number of cumulated episodes. An increase in the number of episodes means a step towards off-network syndication. Thus, the contribution of an additional episode increases the deficit level but at a decreasing rate.

The growth of the total market means that the networks can air more expensive shows without paying for all of the costs. This is because producers can spread out the costs across several distribution windows. The ability to distribute over several stages of windows of exhibition makes media products such as television programs unique in the sense that the total market size determines the type and size of initial investment.

The most fundamental problem of this study is that the international syndication market was not taken into account. The international market has grown substantially in terms of revenue sources for motion picture and television program makers. Thus, when the producers engage in a new production, they will take into account the potential international market for the show. This is especially true for dramas. A further analysis of the international market will be crucial for a complete study of the program market.

Another suggestion for future study is that more recent data be added. The data used in this study goes back to the time when the Finsyn Rules were in effect. Since the rules prohibits the networks to syndicate programs in the domestic market, the network could not bear the risk of prime time shows depending on the capability and willingness to bear risk. The repeal of the rules in 1995 would have had effects on who bears more risk of the programs and who gets more profits from the future distribution channels. Nevertheless, the basic principles guiding the relationship between the supplier of programs and the networks will remain more or less the same.

References

Albarran, A.B., Pilcher, A., Steele, D. & Weis, J. (1991 Fall) Trends in network prime-time programming, 1983-1990: The emergence of the Fox Network. Feedback, 32, 2-5.

At what cost? (1989, Oct.). Channels, pp32-33.

Atkin, D. & Litman, B.(1986). Network TV programming: Economics, audiences, and the ratings game, 1971-1986. Journal of Communication, 32-50.

Barwise, T.P.(1986). Repeat-viewing of prime time television series. Journal of Advertising Research, 9-14.

Blum, R.A. & Lindheim, R.D. (1987). Primetime network television programming. Boston, MA: Focal Press.

Brooks, T. & Marsh, E.(1995). The complete directory to prime time network and cable TV shows(6th ed.). New York: Ballantine Books.

Cable Services Company, Inc. (1997). Television and cable factbook. Washington D.C.: Warren Publishing Inc.

Charting the new season.(1987, Sep.). Channels, pp60-61.

Coen, R.J. (1994 May 2). Ad gain of 5.2% in '93 marks downturn's end, in Advertising Age, 65(19), p4.

Coen, R.J. (1995 May 8). More gains foreseen for '95 spending, in Advertising Age, 66(1), p36.

Coen, R.J. (1996 May 20). '96 expected to deliver energetic ad growth, in Advertising Age, 67(3), p22.

Crandall, R. (1972). FCC regulation, monopsony and network television program costs. Bell Journal of Economics and Management Science, 3(2), 483-508.

Dominick, J. R. & Pearce, M. C. (1976). Trends in network primetime programming, 1953-1974. Journal of Communication, 26(1), 70-80.

Deficits pending.(11988, Oct.). Channels, pp56-57.

Eastman, S.T. (1993). Broadcast/Cable programming: Strategies and practices(4th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Economic Report of the President.(1991, Feb.). Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office.

Economic Report of the President.(1997, Feb.). Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office.

Erickson, H. (1989). Syndicated televison: The first forty years, 1947-1987. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.

Fisher, F. M. (1991). The financial interest and syndication rules in network television: Regulatory fantasy and reality(1985). in Monz, J.(ed) Industrial organization, economics and the law. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gensch, D. & Shaman, P. (1980a). Models of competitive television ratings. Journal of Marketing Research, 17, 307-315.

Gensch, D. & Shaman, P. (1980b). Predicting TV ratings. Journal of Advertising Research, 20(4), 85-92.

Gujarati,D.(1988). Basic econometrics. New York: McGraw-Hill,Inc.

Haley, K(1989). Syndication, 1995. C.C. Publishing.

Head, S.W., Sterling, C.H. & Schofield, L. B.(1994). Broadcasting in America: A survey of electronic media. 7th ed. Boston, MA:Houghton, Mifflin Company.

Horen,J.H.(1980). Scheduling of network television programs. Management Science,26(4), 354-370.

Hsu, H. (1994 June). Development of television syndication and Federal Communications Commission regulations since 1970s. Master of Arts Thesis. California State University, Fresno.

Jankowski, G.F. & Fuchs, D. (1995). Television today and tomorrow: It won't be what you think. NY, NY: Oxford University Press.

Kolker, R. (1994). Network and first-run syndication deals. Entertainment Law & Finance, 9(11), 3-5.

Litwak, M. (1994). Dealmaking in the film and television industry;From negotiations to final contracts. Hollywood, CA: Silman-James Press.

Londoner, D.J. (1985). The changing economics of entertainment. in Balino, T.(ed).(1985). The American film industry. Madison, WI:The University of Wisconsin Press.

McAlphine, D.B. (1975). The televsion programming industry. New York, NY: Tucker, Anthony & R.L. Day.

McLellan, S. (1997 June 9). Upfront sales hit $6 billion, Broadcasting & Cable, p14.

McNeil, A. (1996). Total Television: The comprehensive guide to programming from 1948 to present(4th edition). New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Nielsen Media Research. (1986-1990). Year-end report on network prime time programs. (Research report). Chicago: Author.

Noll, R.G., Peck, M.J. & McGowan, J. (1973) Economic aspects of television regulation. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution.

Owen,B.M. & Wildman,S.S.(1992). Video economics. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Paul Kagan Associates, Inc. (1994). The economics of TV programming and syndication. Carmel, CA: Author.

Pearce,A.(1980). The economic and political strength of the television networks, in Botein,M. & Rice,D.M.(eds). Network television and the public interest. MA:Lexington Books. 3-24.

Prime time's price tag.(1990, Sep. 10). Channels, pp.50-51.

The returning shows.(1986, Sep.). Channels, pp58-59.

Robinson,K.S.(1993). Predicting success in syndication of off-network programs. Unpublished master's thesis. Northwestern University.

Robinson, K.S.(1996). The performance of first-run and off-network syndicated television programs, 1964 - 1993. Northwestern University Doctoral Dissertation.

Syndication at a glance. (1991, August 26). Variety, P46.

Television Programming Source Books. (1996). New York: Act III Publishing.

U.S. Federal Communications Commission. Network inquiry special staff.(1980). An analysis of television program production, acquisition and distribution. Washington,D.C.;U.S. Government Printing Office.

Van Petten V.S. (1987). Television syndication: A practical guide to business and legal issues. L.A. California: L.A. County Bar Association.

Waterman, D(1992). "Narrowcasting" and "broadcasting" on nonbroadcast media: A program choice model. Communication Research, 19(10), 3-25.

Waterman, D. & Grant, A. (1991) Cable television as an aftermarket. Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, 35, 179-188.

Wildman, S.S. (1994). One-way flows and the economics of audiencemaking, in Ettema, J.S. & Whitney, D.C. (eds.). Audiencemaking: How the media create the audience. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. 115-141.

Wildman, S. & Robinson, K.S.(1995). Network programming and off-network syndication profits: Strategic links and implications for television policy. Journal of Media Economics, 8(2), 27-48.

Woodbury,J.,Besen,S. & Fournier,G.(1983, Autumn). The determinants of network television program prices: Implicit contracts, regulation and bargaining power. The Bell Journal of Economics. 351-365.

1985-1986 Network primetime season at a glance. (1985 September 25). Variety, pp50, 54-55, 100, 102.

1991-1992 Primetime at a glance. (1991 August 26). Variety, pp48-54.

1992-1993 Primetime at a glance. (1992 August 31). Variety, pp30-31, 34, 36.

Creative Ownership Transition Strategies for Community Newspapers

Presented to the Media Management & Economics Division,

AEJMC Convention,

Baltimore, Maryland, Aug. 5-8, 1998

By Dane Claussen, M.S., M.B.A.

Teaching Assistant & Doctoral Student,
Henry W. Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication,
The University of Georgia

President & Principal, American Newspaper Consultants, Ltd.,
P.O. Box 3028, Athens, GA 30612-1028; 706-542-6190 (O); 800-554-3091 (H/FAX);
claussen@arches.uga.edu

Creative Ownership Transition Strategies for Community Newspapers

"According to investment authority John Spooner, the steps in a deal are 'conception, confusion, panic, punish the innocent, and reward the nonparticipants.'"--Benson, Crego & Drucker, 1990, p. 208

Introduction

The last 15 years of newspaper merger and acquisition activity appear to many newspaper publishers to have simply been a thrilling roller-coaster ride--values of all sorts of newspaper publishing companies went way up, then went way down and now are high, low or somewhere in between depending on which properties one is referring to and with whom one is talking.

But this is far from telling the whole story about the newspaper acquisitions market (Claussen, 1992, 1995c). Many other changes have occurred, some obvious and some not so obvious. Some of the obvious ones include:

1) Daily newspaper groups are increasingly buying weeklies.

2) Daily newspaper groups are increasingly buying newspapers from other groups.

3) Capital gains are now treated the same way as ordinary income for newspaper company sellers.

4) The Small Business Administration now will guarantee bank loans to newspapers.

5) Increasing evidence exists that newspapers are not as critical to Americans' lives as they once were, and that while newspapers' potential importance is huge, their actual importance, even in rural areas, is frequently overestimated by publishers, editors and journalism professors (Claussen, 1996).

Some of the not so obvious developments include:

1) A continuing decline in the number of second and third generation individuals interested in taking over family newspaper companies (Claussen, 1994b), and an apparent increase in the number of weekly newspaper owners and employees with no previous experience or education in journalism (Neibergall and Claussen, 1995).

2) What newspaper brokers say is a dramatic decline in the number of potential buyers for small and medium-sized weekly newspapers; this is because today's Baby Boomers who would

previously have been "Mom-and-pop" buyers generally have not saved money for a mid-life purchase of a business, and buyers with outside financial backing don't want to bother with small deals.

3) What seems to this paper's author--a former newspaper broker--is a dramatic decline in the number of potential buyers for rural newspapers; while Baby Boomer professionals have suddenly discovered places such as Montana, and small towns within an hour's drive of a major city, Baby Boomers are not moving to Truth or Consquences, N.M., or Shelbyville, Tenn. 4) Although most small weekly publishers in my experience haven't heard the news, newspaper companies' market values are now almost always determined through a multiple of owner's cash flow; the old formula of a percentage or multiple of gross revenues has almost disappeared except as a ballpark translation of cash flow multiples.

5) The number of weekly newspapers being published, compared with the age of many publishers and the numbers that have been sold in the last few years, also tends to indicate that actuarial trends alone will result in a large number of weekly papers put up for sale within a relatively short period of time in the near future.

6) And finally, little evidence exists that suggests small newspaper owners, newspaper association executives or journalism professors are any more educated or sophisticated about matters such as acquisitions, estate planning, taxes or ESOPs than they ever were (Claussen, 1995a, 1995b, 1995d, 1995e, 1995f). Unfortunately, the individuals whom they call on most frequently for help--attorneys, CPAs and bankers--are also no more knowledgeable about the newspaper industry than they ever were.

The complexity of the newspaper acquisition environment, combined with the overwhelming importance of a newspaper acquisition being structured to best achieve the owner's goals, makes it incumbent upon newspaper owners considering selling to learn as much as they can about the subject. And the increasingly difficult task of selling independently-owned individual and/or rural weekly newspapers makes it particularly critical that newspaper owners are aware of, and thoughtfully consider, their options in selling their newspaper. Although publishers understandably still prefer and hope for an ideal sale scenario--an all cash upfront deal or an all-cash deal structured over time to minimize taxes but made with a buyer whose financing, professional competence and integrity are above question--such ideal sale scenarios are occurring less often for small newspaper owners. And the many alternatives available, combined with tax laws, can mean that so-called ideal sales are not so ideal at all.

Patronage Concept

Western Washington University professor Tim Pilgrim (1994) presented at the National Newspaper Association's Newspapers and Community-Building II Symposium (co-sponsored by the NNA and Kansas State University's Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media) a paper that explained the history, current case examples and possible general usefulnesss of a concept called "patronage" or the "junior executive program." Briefly, the patronage concept involves an older owner identifying and working with a younger person--over a period of up to 20 years--to eventually take over ownership and management of a newspaper publishing company; the younger owner starts in a management position and the older owner continues in a management position, but exact titles and responsibilities change over time and the former owner may no longer be in management at all at the buyout's end. Pilgrim said that the late newspaper broker Marion Krehbiel used a 25-25-50 formula, under which 25% of the company's stock would be made available to the younger individual, and after the younger individual had bought that 25%, then another 25% of the stock was made available for gradual purchase. When the younger person had 50% purchased, then he or she usually could get traditional financing to buy the other 50% of the stock; many times Krehbiel personally lent the younger owner money at some point to make the plan work when it wasn't working on its own.

This structure has many flaws. One problem Pilgrim mentioned was that if the newspaper company's performance improves dramatically after the younger owner assumes a management role, the older owner may try to alter or nullify the terms of the deal, either because of pure greed, or because of rightly or wrongly believing that the performance improvement was due partially or wholly to his/her own efforts before and/or after the younger owner bought in.

Other flaws in this patronage system are even bigger. Agreements should be drawn up that deal with matters such as the two owners not getting along or not agreeing with each other. A 5-year or 10-year or 15-year patronage-type buyout agreement is like a marriage with almost no chance of an agreeable divorce. If the buyout period is 15 years, what happens if the younger and older owners get along for the first 5 years but the relationship begins to deteriorate, so that by the end of the seventh year, the two owners can't get along, can't agree on the direction of the company, and the younger owner still only owns 50%?

What happens if the younger owner gets to the point of owning 50% of the stock but can't get financing for the rest? Banks still don't like to loan money to small newspaper companies, because they tend to have high market values, relatively high levels of accounts receivable and accounts payable, and relatively low levels of cash on hand and hard assets. Based on the experience of this paper's author, many bankers are still under the incorrect impression that the Small Business Administration's long-time policy of not guaranteeing loans to newspapers--repealed two years ago--was based on a notion that newspapers are an unsafe investment rather than Congress' 1960s fear of the SBA being used politically.

The assumption that younger owners can afford to buy even 50% of a newspaper company over 10 or 20 years out of savings from their salary--even when it is a manager/executive level salary--also is probably unrealistic. Let's say the newspaper company is worth $500,000 and the younger owner wants to own 50% of it after 10 years; assuming the older owner charges no interest and the buyout agreement calls for the stock price to remain steady for the entire 10 years, both of which are extremely unlikely terms, the younger owner still must come up with 25,000 post-tax dollars per year to buy the stock. This also is highly unlikely to work.

Another problem is that when the younger owner owns no stock, 25%, or even 50% of the stock, he or she is investing more and more time and money into a corporation of which he still doesn't have ownership control. This wouldn't be so bad except for the fact that as time goes on, the business environment changes and the owners change, so that the younger and older owner may increasingly disagree while they are increasingly dependent upon each other financially (assuming for the moment that the older owner, even in a worst-case scenario, would find selling only 50% of the company to be financially and personally disastrous). Moreover, as time goes on, the older owner may be less and less interested and involved in the business operations, while at the same time still owning 50% or more of the stock and retaining decision-making authority.

Yet another problem is the 25%, 25%, 50% structure of Krehbiel's deals. Today, most intelligent small business people, attorneys, CPAs, and consultants know that anytime a 50-50 ownership partnership exists, the potential result is stalemate on issues big and small. When the younger owner owns 25%, or indeed any percent up to 49.9%, he or she knows that for better or worse, the older owner still controls the corporation. The younger owner knows that he or she must attempt to be successful in influencing the older owner at times when they disagree, but unless the older owner is clearly violating fiduciary responsibilities and the younger owner has a practical method for dealing with such violations, that the younger owner is ultimately at the older owner's mercy. When the younger owner obtains 50.1% of the stock or more, he or she controls the corporation and is smart to ask for or simply listen to the older owner's now minority-ownership advice. A 50-50 ownership, even for a short period, allows for neither of these results.

Pilgrim referred to 1983, 1985 and 1987 patronage type agreements in Washington state. The 1983 and 1985 deals, in which a newspaper broker and a publisher formed new companies with younger owners-to-be who needed capital, solved the 50-50 problem. The younger owner could own up to 49% of the company after working there for more than five years. But this apparently still didn't solve the problem of how the company's operations or the finances of both older and younger owners would deal with innumerable possible problems that could crop up during those five years.

The 1987 case intentionally or unintentionally solved more of the problems. Pilgrim said that the older owner began talking with the potential younger owner in 1987, but they didn't draw up any written agreements untiil 1989, and they didn't take effect until 1990. The older owner explained that the time delay gave him a chance to be sure that he was as "dedicated" to the pending management transition and owership buyout, which could take 20 years, as the prospective younger buyer was. But this also gave both the older owner and the younger prospective owner additional "courting" time. This was a positive development. But even in this case, the younger owner would not obtain majority ownership control for at least 10 years--a time period during which almost anything could happen to the older owner, younger owner and/or company, with neither the younger owner or the older owner having total control of either the other owner or the company. And a related contract dealing with the operating positions of the older and younger owners did not specify the time(s) at which the younger owner would obtain which prerogatives and responsibilities, meaning that the older and younger owners can easily disagree over the nature and timing of responsibility changes. For example, the older owner could easily demand to retain the titles and responsibilities of Publisher for the entire 10+ years during which he owns the majority of stock; the other owner would not have any power to overturn such a demand.

Finally, the older owner retaining management responsibilities for a sustained period of time easily can undercut the younger owner's chances of obtaining a true employer-employee arrangement; employees will still look to the older owner for approval, advice and to make complaints, even after the older owner no longer is CEO, and in fact, probably as long as the older owner has any connection at all with his former company.

Problems of the patronage concept are discussed here at length because despite Pilgrim's efforts to extoll the possibly general usefulness of the patronage concept, it is fraught with many professional, financial and personal risks for the prospective buyer. Moreover, other buyout plans should avoid including any of the faulty aspects of the patronage concept.

The point of the present paper obviously is not to refute Pilgrim's paper entirely, however. Krehbiel apparently used the patronage plan some 16 times over a newspaper brokerage career spanning about 50 years, and it apparently has been successfully implemented three times in the past 13 years in one state alone. It must be pointed out, however, that these transactions are only a fraction of the total number of newspaper ownership changes during those periods.

The fact that Pilgrim repeatedly emphasized the patronage-type transition as one that could help newspaper owners keep their papers independent and out of the hands of newspaper groups ("chains") actually is in a strange way more closely related to this paper. He seemed to assume or imply that all newspaper owners prefer to keep their newspapers under independent ownership; that chains are actively buying small newspapers (all apparently weeklies in Pilgrim's examples) from private owners; that newspaper buyers, sellers and brokers are willing and able to consider a patronage-plan instead of other structures or no deal at all; and that many potential buyers of small newspapers don't have enough capital for even the down payment of a typical percentage of the total purchase price, let alone the entire purchase price. Based on four years of experience as a newspaper broker throughout a large region of the United States, it is the opinion of this paper's author that Pilgrim was correct only on the fourth of those four apparent assumptions.

If one assumes that chains are not buying many independently-owned, stand-alone weekly newspapers, and this is a fact, then whether small newspaper owners prefer independent owners over group owners becomes a moot point. (In any case, based on the overwhelming number of independent newspapers that have been sold to groups over the past 100 years, much evidence suggests that independent newspaper owners give mostly lip service to the independence issue; about 95% seem to gladly sell to a group if a group is the high bidder, only bidder, or only competent bidder.) If one assumes in addition that newspaper buyers and sellers do or would have many objections to the patronage concept, and that many or most potential buyers for independent, stand-alone weeklies don't have much capital, then how does the typical small newspaper owner sell or otherwise dispose of his or her newspaper at terms and conditions as close as possible to what he or she wants and needs? That is the subject of this paper.

Ownership Transition Strategies

Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs)

An increasingly well-known alternative to selling a newspaper to either an outsider or an individual or small group of insiders is the Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), in which employees earn stock in the company proportional to their length of service, salary level and/or position in the company. The stock is held in trust, and rank-and-file employees do not excercise either direct management control of the company nor can they directly or independently sell their stock to outsiders. ESOPs also retain employee control by requiring that employees sell back their stock to the company upon their own retirement and/or departure from the company. Perhaps the best-known successful newspaper ESOP in the United States is Milwaukee's Journal Communications Inc., which owns the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, weeklies, shoppers, printing plants and other media and media-related assets. Even in this case, however, a former columnist briefly worked in 1996 with a New York investment banker, both claiming that the company's management prevented employee stockholders from appropriately considering an anonymous party's buyout offer. (Ironically, the former columnist's stock in the company already was worth about $800,000, and he apparently was simply intent on ESOP shareholders doubling the value of their holdings and cashing out; simple math shows the unemployed columnist would have made $800,000 more for a year or two of rabble-rousing.)

Other daily newspaper ESOPs have gone even less smoothly. Several have been forced to sell to outsiders, exactly what the original owners tried to avoid, when too many employees trying to cash out of the ESOP many years before retirement age has drained employees' trust fund; the company can contribute a maximum of only 25% of total payroll per year to the ESOP trust fund.

The on-line newsletter from newspaper broker John Cribb, of Bolitho-Cribb & Associates, has described two ESOP cases: the original owner of a group of weeklies and shoppers in Iowa, who still is recommending the ESOP route, and the former owner of the Daily News Miner in Fairbanks, Alaska, who today recommends against it. Richard Knowles, President and Publisher of Denison Newspapes, Inc., of Denison, Iowa, explained that in his company's ESOP, his family retained 49% of the company's stock and management control through its board of directors. The family did not have to pay capital gains taxes on selling 51% of their stock to the ESOP, and will not have to in the future until and unless it sells stock it bought with the proceeds on the New York Stock Exchange. Because the company became 51% employee-owned, half the interest paid for money borrowed from the bank for financing the purchase of stock was exempt from income taxes levied on the lender, which allowed for a lower interest rate. Cribb's description of this ESOP pointed out that a "Properly managed ESOP will provide funding for redemption for retirees through a program of contributions to the ESOP, an insurance program and other methods of building reserves, including sinking funds that are established like depreciation reserves."

Knowles said an ESOP is resulting in his employees "sharing the American dream" of ownership, only two of his 35 employees left in the ESOP's first two years, that the company has high morale and is oriented to customer satisfaction, and that product quality and commitment to the First Amendment have remained unchanged. The only downside Knowles noted was higher accounting costs, although ESOPs also require regular appraisals as well.

But Charles L. Gray, Publisher Emeritus in Fairbanks, explained that legislation during the past 20 years has required that the ESOP be allowed to participate in major business decisions if it has borrowed money, which almost all ESOPs have. Broker Cribb paraphrased Gray as calling this an "intolerable situation because under these circumstances, important decisions are then made by a 'committee' instead of hard business judgment by management." Gray also pointed out that under law, ESOPs now must be revised periodically, and such revisions must be approved by the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor. That approval process, Cribb's newsletter noted, means potential government interference in newspapers' internal affairs, in addition to paying expensive experts to keep the plan legal.

Cribb also noted Gray's concern that economic conditions alone, not just a failure to set up the ESOP in the most flexible, safest ways, could mean "annual company contributions would not be adequate to meet payout for terminating vested participants." A daily newspaper's ESOP in Illinois recently was terminated for only this reason.

Even though the Fairbanks ESOP was eventually dissolved for other reasons, Gray pointed out, it wasn't easy. The Daily News Miner's ESOP advisor projected that the IRS and DOL would take only eight months to approve the ESOP's termination, but as Cribb noted in bold-face type, "Instead it took 2 years and eight months of expensive and exasperating prodding to get approval from these governmental agencies."

Process or method other than ESOP to move ownership to employee(s)

Several methods exist to transfer ownership--especially partial ownership--of a newspaper company to existing and/or future employees, many of which are well-known but seldom used by small newspaper publishing companies. A stock purchase is one; employees--perhaps all, or perhaps only managers--would have the right to buy treasury shares. This could allow employees to have flexibility in terms of how much, when and how often they buy stock in the company, although most companies place limits on how much stock an employee can buy and at what times of the year. But if an owner is serious about transferring ownership to employees who are motivated and able to invest in it, it certainly is to the owner's benefit to be as flexible as possible with regard to when shares are bought. This is an alternative to an ESOP, in which employees are essentially rewarded for longevity and in which they do not have to take the initiative; ESOPs are, in fact, a kind of golden handcuffs arrangement under which employees who would otherwise not stay at a company stay anway. Such employees are stable but often too stable, knowledgeable about the company's history and environment but too often fighting the last war instead of this one or the next one. The other problem with a stock purchase plan is that the degree to which employees will assume ownership is usually is not scheduled, so it can not be predicted ahead of time or even while in progress over a period of years. Employees may never acquire a majority of stock in the company this way, especially if the owner doesn't sell his or her shares to the treasury, another potential frustration for the owner wishing to retire or otherwise move on.

Stock as compensation, usually bonuses, is another method. In this case, the owner has the most control over who ends up with stock in the company, and such a system can be quite attractive to all parties involved under certain conditions. For example, let's say a small newspaper company is worth $500,000, and the publisher owns all of the stock. The company has an excellent editor and a great advertising director who both have roots in the community and easily could be key long-term employees; in fact, the owner would like to sell the newspaper to them eventually, but knows they are unlikely to ever have $125,000 in cash between them for even a 25% down payment. The owner could gradually sell his shares to the company treasury, but instead of paying the owner cash, the owner puts that money into a qualified retirement plan for himself held by the company; this avoids taxes on the shares' sale, forces the owner to financially prepare for retirement, and makes stock available for the editor and advertising director. Let's say that the owner pays the editor and advertising director modest cash salaries, which frees up money for the owner's take-home and/or to build the business, and gives the editor and the advertising director each 2% of the company' stock each year as a bonus. The editor and advertising director stay at the company year after year, preventing turnover that is directly and indirectly costly to the firm, and allowing the owner-publisher to work less than he or she would with higher turnover in key posts. This ideally allows the company to grow continuously and smoothly.

Consider what has happened at the end of 20 years: the owner has several hundred thousand dollars available for himself in the company retirement fund; the editor and advertising director each own 40% of the firm, which they have earned; the company is probably worth several times what it was before, and the original owner still owns 20% of the stock; the owner hasn't worked as hard as he/she otherwise would have; the owner does not need to find qualified buyers to sell the company to because the owner essentially already has sold it; the owner never pays large capital gains taxes all at once and/or potential inheritance taxes are minimized if not eliminated, and the paper, with knowledgeable, stable managers, has no doubt served its community well.

In the typical newspaper sale today, an aging publisher wants to cash out all at once, often with short notice, and often none of those results occur. The owner has no retirement plan inside or outside the company, key managers own no stock and turnover is relatively high, the company--still dependent on a frequently burned-out owner/publisher for so much of its revenues and reputation--isn't worth as much as it should be or could have been, the owner still must locate a qualified buyer and hope the buyer is competent and honest, the owner and/or his family take a big tax hit, and because of the cumulative effect of these circumstances, the newspaper probably hasn't and won't optimally serve its community.

A final option, one typically used within families to limit inheritance taxes, is to give as a gift, rather than as compensation, stock in the company to family members and/or employees. Current law allows a person to give $10,000 worth of cash, stock or other assets, per person, per year, tax free, and that person's spouse can do the same. The lifetime limit of such tax-free gifts is $600,000; if an owner and his wife each can own half of a fairly large weekly newspaper, weekly newspaper group, or even a very small daily, through advance planning they can avoid capital gains taxes for themselves and gift or inheritance taxes for the recipients. This process also avoids capital gains taxes on additional future increases in the company's value, until the recipients sell their stock. The only downside is that even at $20,000 per year in stock for married owners, and say two children and one employee receiving stock, it still takes 10 years to transfer ownership of a publishing company worth $600,000.

Sell only majority control in the paper, or some assets and not others

In cases in which owners of a business own different percentages, as they normally should structure the sale so that no 50-50 decision-making stalemate occurs, owners with a majority ownership share (and possibly those with only a plurality share) should be able to sell their stock at a management control premium over a proportionate percentage of the company's total value (Cohn, 1990). In other words, one normally can sell 51% of a company's stock for more than 51% of the company's value (adding typically 10-40% of the company's total value); likewise, a minority share of stock (49.9% or less) will normally sell for a discount (typically 36-40% below book value, which usually is an even higher percentage off of market value) related to lack of management control from strictly proportionate percentage of the company's total value. Minority shares also are subject to an additional discount for their presumed lack of marketability; i.e. many fewer potential buyers will even consider buying a minority share of a business than would consider a majority share of a business.

Although this is an important principle to keep in mind any time unequal shares of ownership exist, it has particular applicability when developing options for selling a newspaper when potential buyers are all short on capital. For instance, if no buyer emerges who has enough for a downpayment on the total price/value of the company, the owner could consider selling only a portion of the company's stock, and the down payment would be for only that portion. And for the owner eager to retire, selling 60% of the stock, or 51%, or 49%, or any other percent less than 100%, is better than no sale at all. Such an agreement would specify how much management control the seller would retain, how profits would be determined for the purposes of the seller receiving dividends on the stock he or she continues to hold, and whether and how the buyer could purchase the rest of the stock.

When a buyer is in the position to buy, say, only 30% of the company, it's clear how to structure the deal and who retains control. Likewise if the buyer and seller can reach an agreeement on substantially more than half the stock. The problematic area will be that in which the buyer's financing is such that he or she could make a down payment on either slightly more or slightly less than half the stock; frequently, both the buyer and seller will demand majority stock ownership to obtain/retain management control.

Why would an owner make a deal to sell only 60% of the stock rather than all of it, even to a buyer with minimal financing? Again, some type of sale is better than no sale. A smaller note payable on the post-downpayment balance also makes it less likely that the buyer will default on the purchase agreement; for most sellers, the prospect of having to resume management of a mismanaged company after they already have retired is a nightmare.

Although the seller may have qualms about whether and for how much he or she will sell the other 40%, this can be solved by agreeing on terms ahead of time. The seller may also be concerned about what the buyer's potential mismanagement will do to the value of that 40%; this is unfounded, since if buyer mismanagement decreases the value of the seller's 40%, he or she would also be decreasing the value of their own 60%. If buyer mismanagement is severe enough to cause the buyer to default on the purchase agreement or even send the company into bankruptcy, the owner who still owns a majority share will not necessarily be hurt, and one who owns a minority will have fewer problems.

An alternative to selling less than 100% of the stock is an asset sale in which the owner sells less than 100% of the assets. For instance, in a typical scenario, the buyer enters into a contract to buy only the subscription list, advertising contracts and files, equipment, furniture, fixtures, files, various corporate and trade names. The seller, however, to keep the price affordable for the buyer, keeps cash on hand, accounts receivable and real estate, but leases the real estate to the buyer for a reasonable or even minimal amount; this way, the buyer needs to come up with only a smaller downpayment and a couple months' worth of working capital. (Responsibility for accounts payable as of the closing date could go to either buyer or seller depending on their size, urgency and other factors.) Such a scenario should allow for certain newspapers to be sold to undercapitalized buyers in deals that otherwise would not occur, with the chance of the buyer defaulting minimized and seller control of key assets maximized; if the buyer is successful in managing the newspaper, he or she will soon enough to eager and able to buy the real estate and any other hard assets not bought originally.

Merge with contiguous newspapers

Both newspaper groups and individual newspapers frequently eye print media within easy driving distance of their existing printer (who may be themselves) as a first step to investigating the potential synergistic effects of buying other nearby publications. It is becoming increasingly unlikely that large economies of scale will be achieved through small publications buying each other because small papers increasingly don't own their own presses or their own buildings, closing down local offices of group-owned papers often causes more problems than it solves, and remaining work is labor intensive (writing, editing, pagination, advertising sales). But print media remain hopeful that newspaper groups can sell advertising to large retailers easier, and/or that strength will prevent or limit other competitors in the market. But what happens when two newspaper owners near each other know that their papers would be more profitable together (in some cases, in fact, common ownership of contiguous papers appears to be the safest or only safe way to ensure their very survival), and yet neither newspaper can afford to buy the other?

A merger may be the answer. In a stronger merger deal, arrangements can still be made for one of the owners' stock in the new company to be bought by the other owner or redeemed by the company over time. In a marger of weaker newspapers, one or more owners who want to cash out and retire may need to wait a while to sell their stock, and may have to settle for dividends, if that, in the meantime. This doesn't sound attractive to most newspaper publishers, who have a large percentage of their net worth tied up in the newspaper and think they need to get as much cash out of it as they can and quickly. The fact is that if a newspaper has another newspaper nearby that is limiting expansion if not competing, and neither company is strong enough to buy the other, the chances of finding an outside buyer also are slim. Again, the merger idea with provision for a buy-out later, even if tied to earnings, is better than no sale or merger at all. Unfortunately, many owners are not willing to even consider a merger because of the issue of who controls the resulting bigger company. A relatively recent Wall Street Journal article, headlined "In many merger deals, ego and price play big roles in which way talks go," was about multi-billion dollar deals, but egos play just as large or even larger a role in small mergers; small business owners are not simply employee-executives, as most Fortune 500 CEOs are, but major stockholders, entrepreneurs, perhaps the company's founder. They also have not been tempered by years of having to be responsive to thousands of stockholders, hundreds or thousands of employees, thousands or millions of customers, an outside board of directors of other successful executives, other top executives, the media and Wall Street analysts. In other words, small business people can make decisions, and often choose to not make a decision. That would be impossible for a Fortune 500 executive and might simply be irrational.

Short of a full-fledged merger, two newspapers near each other also can put together their own Joint Operating Agreement--combine advertising, circulation, production and business functions, and maybe share coverage of the state legislature or out of town sports events involving local teams. An article in the Aug. 17, 1996, issue of Editor & Publisher, "Weeklies' Pact a JOA Forerunner?", told the story of a joint operating agreement between two Indiana weeklies that has been in effect since 1929 and will continue in effect until at least 2029.

Sell to a person or firm who are not primarily interested/involved in journalism

Suggesting that owners consider selling their newspapers to individuals or corporations not primarily interested or involved in journalism may seem to be completely contrary to editors' instincts. And because selling to an individual or group without journalism credentials might result in a decrease in the newspaper's quality, or in a worst case scenario, the paper's financial failure, suggesting non-newspaper industry buyers would seem to flout professional concerns addressed elsewhere in this paper and certainly strongly emphasized by Pilgrim.

Again, however, if this paper's goal is to offer creative alternatives to traditional deals for newspaper sales, then being willing to talk with potential buyers without journalism credentials must be mentioned. Selling to non-journalists who have sufficient financing is better than not selling the paper at all, unless the owner has reason to believe that particular non-journalist buyers have plans in mind for the paper that the owner finds simply unconscionable.

It is likely that the only non-journalists who would consider buying a small weekly newspaper would be persons or corporations who already have roots in the community, such as when TV "comedianne" Roseanne Barr bought weeklies in Iowa, or have other businesses in the community. In either case, they know the area. Persons who already own other businesses in the community may believe that they have vested interest, in their own existing business, to see to it that their city or town continues to have a locally-owned newspaper, and a newspaper at all. Newspaper owners who own other businesses in the area also would almost have to be regular advertisers in the paper, even if they weren't before.

Finally, although some newspaper owners may doubt that some or all other local business owners are capable and interested in learning the various knowledge, skills, techniques and methods necessary to publish a local weekly newspaper, this really is not that much of an issue. Many newspaper owners have trained high school students and homemakers to perform most tasks at a newspaper, and other newspaper owners may also be able to do so. And the fact that new owners may not have journalism experience or education is not necessarily any guarantee that they won't grasp and successfully deal with issues such as story judgment, ethics, freedom of the press, and other parts of the job that editors hold dear; after all, the newspaper industry includes many individuals who have journalism experience and education but still don't have good news judgment, ethics, or any but the most superficial understanding of the First Amendment.

Public auction

Although this paper's author has been unable to locate any case of a newspaper sold by auction other than several fished out of bankruptcy court, auction is always an alternative for selling anything. Certainly there have been several highly-publicized instances of bed and breakfasts and other properties sold by national auction, with the internet making such a process easier than ever. Written, sealed bids could be solicited from local business owners, employees, creditors, nearby newspapers, nearby printing companies, colleges/universities, and newspaper groups that might be interested.

Although such an auction might not net as many bids or as high bids as many owners might hope for and even predict, it does allow for all potential interested parties to be on an equal footing, and possibly for the owner to obtain the highest price. It also is a possible avenue for an owner who has failed to obtain an appropriate buyer through such usual means as newspaper brokers, advertisements in trade publications and networking through newspaper associations.

Two cautions about an auction: a minimum price must be set, and often in an auction more than other transactions, terms will probably be more important than price.

Going Public

Not too many years ago, small companies never even would have thought about going public, and indeed, financial markets' attitudes towards initial public offerings (IPOs) by small companies wax and wane. And although general trends should indicate how a particular initial public offering should fare, no one knows exactly how the public offering will fare until it's made.

Operating small companies with gross revenus of, say, a million dollars, sometimes go public, and of course, some high tech and research firms have gone public with essentially no revenues at all and/or astounding operating losses. And while some changes in state and federal laws have over recent years made it more likely that a particular stock transaction involving a small, privately-owned company falls within the scope of securities regulations, other changes have made it easier for small companies, particularly those with operations in more than one state, to go public.

Donate or sell the company to a non-profit organization, or convert it into one

The experience of the Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media with community newspapers--one in Almena, Kansas and the other in Elwood, Kansas--produced completely by volunteers (Claussen, Ries and LeTourneau, 1996) has demonstrated like nothing else the idea of a community newspaper being owned and staffed by a non-profit organization, with or without paid employees. For the owner to obtain any financial benefit from turning over his or her newspaper to a local non-profit group, that owner probably would have to sell or give the newspaper to a community group that is tax-exempt, preferably one formed solely for the purpose of continuing the paper's publication. This may not be easy. But, again, if no buyers offering cash or other assets of interest emerge forthcoming, turning the paper over to a local non-profit organization will result in tax benefits if that organization is tax-exempt. It might make the paper more of a community effort than ever, with a possibly more diverse group staffing it, and certainly forces the community to put its money--so to speak--where its mouth is if it wants to continue having its own local newspaper.

Donating their newspaper publishing company to a college or university journalism program or another non-profit, tax-exempt organization, may be an effective option. Donating a newspaper company would allow the publisher to take a nice charitable deduction, perhaps saving as much in taxes as one would net on selling the business after capital gains taxes and costs of selling the business, and setting up a charitable remainder trust, otherwise known as a Wealth Accumulation Trust, plus a Wealth Replacement Trust, can provide a tax deduction and income for life to the donating owners, plus an inheritance for heirs. It would provide journalism professors and students the opportunity to receive continuing, hands-on responsibility and opportunities in running a newspaper.

This option should not be surprising. Colleges and universities of all sizes all over the United States have students producing newspapers published anywhere from weekly to six days a week. The Columbia Missourian is a regional daily newspaper owned by the University of Missouri, and managed and staffed by its faculty and students. In 1989, the Medicine Bow Post, in Wyoming, was donated to the University of Wyoming journalism program. The journalism program operated the weekly Post for six years before it was decided that students could get better experience with an on-line local newspaper in Laramie (instead of writing for a tiny weekly 60 miles away). So although the university no longer operates the newspaper, it did prove that university ownership and management of a previously independent community paper is feasible.

It is not necessarily out of the question for a university or other non-profit organization to buy a newspaper for their professors and students to publish. Colleges/universities and school districts now own and/or manage a wide variety of businesses, ranging from bookstores to hotels and golf courses. Iowa newspaper broker John van der Linden reports (van der Linden, 1996) that in 1995, one prospective buyer for the Westbrook (Minn.) Sentinel was the local school district, which wanted to buy a business for students to operate in conjunction with their coursework. Both van der Linden and the newspaper's owner were open to the idea, but another potential buyer made a higher offer than the school district.

Although The Washington Times and The Christian Science Monitor may be the only general interest, mass circulation newspapers in the United States that are church-owned, it would not be surprising if churches made bids for other newspapers. Churches and organizations closely affiliated with churches already own a large number of broadcast and cable television stations, radio stations, magazines and specialized newspapers. At the very least, other members of a particular church might be financially and otherwise supportive if a member bought a local newspaper and clearly intended to be a cheerleader for one denomination or group of denominations. It is difficult to forget the description by Vidich and Bensman (1968, pp. 267-268) of what happened in the pseudonymous "Springdale" when an independent editor sold the town's paper in the mid-1950s:

> During the period of this study Lee sold his newspaper to an outsider who was also a loyal

> Baptist. The character of the newspaper quickly changed from religious neutralism to fervent partisanship, i.e., top priority was given to religious news, weekly prayers, religious editorials. The conflict between religious and secular life which had lain dormant under Lee's policy of strict separation became an open issue which threatened both the newspaper's circulation and the precarious equilibrium which prevails between political and religious leaders.

Shutting Down

Despite all of the various options and ideas for transferring majority ownership of a newspaper in a way beneficial to its owner(s), many owners who can't find a buyer have too quickly and easily decided to simply stop publishing and liquidate their paper(s). In the Midwest alone; scores of weekly newspapers have been shutdown in the last couple of decades; given the cyclical nature of the Midwest economy, long-term population and economic declines in much of the Midwest, and the changes in retailing and its advertising, the labor pool, competition for advertising, newspaper printing and delivery costs that have affected everyone, many and perhaps most of these shutdowns were essentially unavoidable and inevitable. But many of them surely weren't.

Turning over management but not ownership

In the case of not being able to find a buyer, or simply wanting to get out of day-to-day management but not selling the company, for whatever reason, a newspaper publisher has many options other than simply delegating more authority to existing employees and simply hoping to take more days off. They include contracting management or leasing the company to various other parties, with or without putting the company into a trust first for income and tax purposes.

Contracting management or leasing the company to other businesses, volunteers

These arrangements can allow for persons who are unsure of their levels of commitment or skill to "test drive" potential ownership of the newspaper, while allowing the owner to retain ownership and, preferably earn dividends.

Creative Ownership Transition Strategies for Community Newspapers

Contracting management to local college journalism professors and/or students

This option offers the benefits of continuing to draw an income from the newspaper company you own; retaining ownership and perhaps waiting to sell on a better day; knowing that the persons most legally, professionally and morally responsible responsible for managing your company--mass communications professors, even if they have delegated most or all work to their students--are not going to disappear in the middle of the night; and knowing that you are helping to educate and train the next generation(s) of journalists.

The idea of contracting management or leasing the company to a college or university is also particularly useful when state laws, budget constraints, political hurdles or other barriers would prevent the college or university from buying the newspaper, and when the newspaper owner's tax situation makes simply donating the newspaper to the college a bad move financially.

Contracting management to newspaper chain

Philip Smith of the Smith Newspapers group has put together what seems like a win-win idea for newspaper owners and for his own firm; he leases newspapers for 10 years, with an option to renew, with lease payments to the owners of 10-12%, perhaps as high as 14%, of gross revenues. Because 10% or more of gross represents most, all or more than all of many newspapers' net profits, however, obviously this only works well for Smith in cases in which he can identify mismanaged papers that can be made dramatically more profitable in a short period of time and/or with minimal effort and expense.

Final words

Sources on the sale of small businesses frequently now advise that a way to both make a small business more affordable for a buyer, and defer taxes on the seller's total proceeds from the company, is to drain off cash from the company over a period of years into a qualified retirement plan that the owner can draw from after and even before the company is sold. Although this idea is worth mentioning, it has been the experience of this paper's author that small, privately-owned publishing companies usually do not have a problem with large quantities of cash piling up. Most publishers seem to take immediate personal advantage of windfall profits, usually paying higher taxes than they need to in the process.

Newspaper company acquisition discussions, often involving strong personalities with little knowledge of finance, taxation and business law, are often difficult, even when of the traditional variety: cash down payment, followed by monthly or quarterly payments over a period of several years. Many of these "ideal" completed sales still lead in default, legal action, buyer's remorse, another sale in a relatively short period of time, and other subsequent developments that are definitely not ideal.

This paper's author is convinced that one typical reason for this is that almost all newspaper acquisitions are, and have been, based on a fixed purchase price, regardless of economic or competitive conditions. And as Lipper (1988) pointed out, leveraged buyouts in U.S. business are typically tied to future earnings, not the fixed amounts that have been so typical in the newspaper industry. So why is the newspaper industry different? Perhaps because newspaper brokers typically base their fees on the total purchase price, and this is easy to do when it is fixed, impossible to do when the total price paid by the buyer wouldn't be known until the payout is completed. Fixed payments in newspaper company purchases, particularly when contrasted with the variable payouts in other industries' acqusitions, is a stark reminder of days when newspaper executives assumed they had *de facto* media monopolies and/or that newspaper gross revenues and net profits were relatively inelastic. Perhaps it is time that the newspaper industry learned a lesson from other industries.

Conclusions

Small newspaper owners, particularly the smallest papers, those in rural areas or those with high levels of competition, are predicted to have an increasingly difficult time satisfactorily transferring ownership of their newspapers during the coming years. At the same time, receiving value for their newspaper remains usually the largest financial transaction of a newspaper owner's life.

Small newspaper owners need to be aware, therefore, that their options are not limited to cash, or cash and promissory note transactions with newspaper groups, nearby independent publishers, or working on their own or through brokers to find other buyers for similar deals. Considering tax implications, income needs, estate planning considerations, and personal preferences of small business owners, numerous methods have been developed to transfer ownership of small businesses; newspaper owners have the ability to, and should, consider most or all options. They should receive competent, experienced advice to effect an ownership transition strategy of their choice.

References Cited or Consulted

Benson, B., Crego, E.T., & Drucker, R.H. (1990). Your family business: A success guide for growth and survival. Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irwin.

Claussen, D.S. (1992, December 21). Outlook: Slow, steady pace seen for dealmaking. Publishers' Auxiliary 128.

Claussen, D.S. (1994a, April). Can you benefit from a consultant? Free Paper Publisher 4(10), 12.

Claussen, D.S. (1994b, July). Second and third generation ownership succession. Free Paper Publisher 5(1), 11-13.

Claussen, D.S. (1995a, March). Preparing to sell your publication. Free Paper Publisher 5(9), 22-23, 46.

Claussen, D.S. (1995b, April). Beyond financial standards. Seminar presented to the Midwest Association of Alternative Newsweeklies 2nd Annual Conference, St. Louis, Mo.

Claussen, D.S. (1995c, April). Current market for shoppers and newspapers. Free Paper Publisher 5(10), 18.

Claussen, D.S. (1995d, June). Financial standards (panelist/co-moderator). Seminar presented to the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies 18th Annual Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Claussen, D.S. (1995e, June). Valuing your newspaper/transition and financing strategies (moderator/panelist). Seminar presented to the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies 18th Annual Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Claussen, D.S. (1995f, November and December). Beyond financial standards: productivity and financial statement analysis. Free Paper Publisher 6, (5) 6-9, 36; (6) 6-7.

Claussen, D.S. (1996, March 28-30). Rural sociology and U.S. community newspapers. Paper presented at the Spring Conference (Theme: "Media, Technology, and Community") of the Mass Communication and Society Division, AEJMC, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, N.D.

Claussen, D.S., Ries, R., & LeTourneau, N. (1996, March 28-30). Public journalism and community involvement: An experiment in volunteer newspaper in a small Kansas town. Panel discussion presented to the Spring Conference (Theme: "Media, Technology, and Community") of the Mass Communication and Society Division, AEJMC, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, N.D.

Cohn, M. (1990). Passing the torch: Transfer strategies for your family business. Liberty Hall Press.

Cribb, J. (1996). Publisher would not recommend ESOP. Bolitho-Cribb Report, on-line, n.v. Available at http://www.imt.net/~jcribb/bcreport.html

Cribb, J. (1996). Weekly publisher recommends ESOP plan. Bolitho-Cribb Report, on-line., n.v. Available at http://www.imt.net/~jcribb/bcreport.html

Lane, M.J. (1985). Purchase and sale of small businesses: Tax and legal aspects. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Lipen, S. (1996, August 22). In many merger deals, ego and pride play big roles in which way talks go. The Wall Street Journal, C1, C6.

Lipper, A. (1988). Venture's financing and investing in private companies: A guide to understanding entrepreneurs and their relationships with investors, lenders, and advisors (Rev'd Ed.). Chicago: Probus Publishing Company.

Neibergall, J., & Claussen, D.S. (1995, October). Southeast Kansas weekly newspaper workshop. Seminar presented by the Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media (Kansas State University), Cherryvale, Kansas, October 1995.

Pilgrim, T.A. (1994, September). Preserving independent editorial voices: The newspaper patronage concept as applied to community papers. Paper presented to the Newspapers and Community Building Symposium, National Newspaper Association Annual Convention.

Riordan, T. (1996, August 17). Weeklies' pact a JOA forerunner? Editor & Publisher, 6-7.

van der Linden, J.E. (1996, June 17). Personal correspondence to this paper's author.

Vidich, A.J., & Bensman, J. (1968). Small town in mass society: Class, power and religion in a rural community (Rev'd Ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

The Representation of Financial Institutions on the Boards of Directors of Publicly-Traded Newspaper Companies

Soontae An
Doctoral Student
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
E-Mail: soontae@email.unc.edu

and

Hyun Seung Jin
Doctoral Student
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
E-Mail: Hjin@email.unc.edu

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB# 3365, Howell Hall
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3365
Phone: (919) 967-3669

Media Management and Economics Division
AEJMC Convention
Baltimore, MD
August 5-8, 1998

The Representation of Financial Institutions on the Boards of Directors of Publicly-Traded Newspaper Companies

by

Soontae An
Doctoral Student
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
E-Mail: soontae@email.unc.edu

and

Hyun Seung Jin
Doctoral Student
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
E-Mail: Hjin@email.unc.edu

ABSTRACT

This study examined the representation of financial institutions on the boards of directors of 17 publicly-held newspaper companies to find its relation with the company's financial status. The ownership and financial data were collected using *Compact Disclosure*, and the data regarding boards of directors were gathered from *Proxy* and *Annual Report*. *Standard & Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives* was used to cross-check the information about the directors and identify financial institutions. Results showed that the larger the size of the newspaper companies, the greater the number of directors from outside organizations, particularly banks. Study revealed that there was a substantial number of financial institutions represented as either primary stockholders or board members in the publicly-traded newspaper companies.

INTRODUCTION

Much research has been devoted to the development and growth of large newspaper companies that are publicly traded on the major American stock exchanges. While industry researchers have focused on the investment aspects of newspapers, communication scholars have tended to investigate the impact of public ownership on the operation of the companies, such as concentration of ownership (Bagdikian, 1991), managerial goals and decision (Blankenburg and Ozanich, 1993; Meyer and Wearden, 1984), financial performance (Lacy, Shaver, and St. Cyr, 1996) and the quality of journalism (Demers, 1991). Those concerned about public ownership of newspapers tend to believe that newspaper companies would face enormous pressure to be cost effective like many other U.S. corporations and that journalistic quality might be sacrificed to satisfy stockholders' interests in short-term profits.

A prevalent feature in the organization of U.S. corporations is an interlocking of directors, in which a person affiliated with one company sits on the board of directors of another firm. A study of 456 of the Fortune 500 manufacturing firms in 1981 revealed that more than 70% of the firms had at least one officer who also sat on the board of a financial institution (Mizruchi, Potts, and Allison, 1993). This interlocking of directors was also found in the newspaper industry. Dreier and Weinberg (1979) found that most of the 300 directors of the 25 largest newspapers also serve on the boards of directors of leading corporations such as banks, insurance companies and law firms. This interlocking of directorships has been viewed as a strategy of securing necessary resources when a company can not generate these resources internally and is uncertain of obtaining them.

For example, a firm that is heavily indebted to a bank may recruit an officer of the bank onto the firm's board to maintain access to capital (Dooley, 1969; Pennings, 1980).

Interlocking directorships could have important ramifications on newspaper companies and the quality of their journalism. Interlocking directorships could impact the newspaper operations because, potentially, the news might be controlled and manipulated by a small group of individuals and corporations concerned with business rather than social interests (Han, 1988). Even though directors do not wield direct influence on everyday news production, they may hold sufficient power to set organizational goals and policy (McManus, 1995). Dreier and Weinberg (1979, p.53) noted that "Such ties may have adverse journalistic consequences. Some of these may be subtle--unconscious self-censorship, for example. In other cases the consequences have been manifest--reporters pressured, stories unassigned, or killed when written... The concern centers on the flow of information and vitality of journalism..."

This study extends the concern over public ownership of newspapers to the composition of boards of directors. The purpose of this study is to examine interlocking directorships in publicly-traded newspaper companies to find out whether they are related to a company's financial status. Like other corporations in the U.S., newspaper organizations need resources in order to survive and face growing pressure to be cost effective. When newspaper companies are continuously and inevitably measured by the financial yardsticks of the corporate world, how do they respond to the uncertainties of availability of capital and financial dependency? How can they manage limited resources, particularly financial ones? Are their strategic decisions to secure financial resources represented in the selection of boards of directors, as in many other U.S. corporations?

More specifically, is the composition of boards of directors related to the companies' financial structure and situations such as corporate size, financial dependency and the degree of a financial institution's ownership?

LITERATURE REVIEW

All publicly traded corporations in the U.S. are required to have a board of directors of at least three persons (Mizruchi 1996). Studies on interlocking boards of directors have flourished in the field of sociology, political science and economics. With the explosion of research on inter-organizational relations, it has become even more prominent in the 1990s. The causes and consequences of this phenomenon have been the source of extensive debate and various theoretical approaches have been advanced.

One of the popular approaches to explain this phenomenon is resource dependency theory, in which organization use co-optation to reduce environmental uncertainty. Selznick's (1949) seminal work defined co-optation as "the process of absorbing new elements into the leadership or policy-determining structure of an organization as a means of adverting threats to its stability or existence." Burt (1979) wrote that "corporate interlocks are a co-optive mechanism." This approach supports the view that interlocks are associated with inter-firm resource dependence, and that interlocking of boards of directors is a strategic device to cope with resource constraints.

Aldrich and Pfeffer (1976) succinctly summarize the principal theme of the resource dependence perspective:

> Administrators manage their environments as well as their organizations, and the former activity may be important, or even more important, than the latter. The presumed end result of such strategies is the acquisition of resources and the survival of the organization, as well as the stabilization of relationships with environmental elements... The resource dependence model calls attention to the importance of environmental contingencies and constraints, at the same time leaving room for the operation of strategic choice on the part of organizational members as they maneuver through known and unknown contexts [pp. 83-84].

The resource dependency theory implicitly assumes that an organization acquires superior control over environmental contingencies by coordinating with other organizations. In this theory, interlocking directorates enable firms to gain information that allows them to increase their efficiencies in transactions with other firms (Chang, 1986, p.24). Interlocking indicates the connection between two firms and, thus, is viewed as a sign of common interest between two organizations (Mizruchi, 1982, p.34).

Most outside directors of large firms are officers of other large firms, especially financial institutions such as banks, insurance companies and investment banks (Mizruchi, Potts, and Allison. 1993). Availability of capital is one of the crucial sources of environmental uncertainty, so the co-optation of representatives of financial institutions to the firm's board of directors is a strategic device to secure access to capital. Mizruchi and Stearns (1988) found that increased demand for capital was associated with the subsequent appointment of directors from financial institutions. Even though media corporations' profit rates are far above other industries, the structural evolution of the media industry toward concentration and conglomeration has increased its need for capital (Dreier, 1975).

Building on this theoretical base, many researchers have attempted to define some variables which would be significantly related to the existence of interlocking directorates.

Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) found that diversification and corporate size were positively correlated with the size of boards of directors. The structural diversification of a firm increases its dependence on other corporations and on several elements in the environment, therefore, increasing the need for market stability. That is an increased need for reducing environmental uncertainty would lead to greater numbers on the board of directors, especially from outside organizations (Burt, 1983; Pennings, 1980).

Much research has been done about the relation between capital dependence and financial interlocking (Allen, 1974; Dooley, 1969; Mizruchi and Stearns, 1988, 1994; Pennings, 1980; Pfeffer, 1972). These studies held that nonfinancial corporations would commonly use corporate interlocks to co-opt financial institutions and thus secure their access to capital.

Mizruchi and Stearns (1988) presented a longitudinal study of the financial interlock ties among 22 large U.S. manufacturing firms between 1953 and 1983 to determine factors affecting the appointment of representatives of financial institutions to the industries' boards. This study showed that declining solvency, declining profit rates and the correspondence of increased demand for capital with contracting stages of the business cycle are associated with the subsequent appointment of new directors from financial institutions.

In 1994, Mizruchi and Stearns implemented another longitudinal study in which they investigated the relationship between borrowing money and the composition of boards of directors. Their hypothesis, that firms with financial-institution representation on their boards of directors would borrow more than would firms without such representation, was supported. This result was consistent with the resource dependence model in that firms are more likely to borrow when representatives of financial institutions on their boards provide information, advice and access to capital.

Other researchers have interpreted the basis for interlocking from the monitoring perspective (Aldrich, 1979; Eisenhardt, 1989). Large stockholders, bankers, and customers frequently expect to achieve board representation. This phenomenon has led some theorists to suggest that interlocks are instruments of corporate control (Mizruchi, 1996). Researchers have identified links between stock ownership and board representation (Burt, 1983; Mizruchi, 1982). Mizruchi (1982) found that a large bank stockholding in a nonfinancial corporation is a strong predictor of interlocking between the two firms.

Picard (1994) analyzed ownership data of 17 publicly-traded newspaper companies and found that the primary owners of major newspaper companies were institutional investors including commercial banks, state pensions and other government investment funds. The study stressed their potential influence upon the decision-making process, particularly involving short-term, profit-driven decisions. In addition, he pointed out another potential threat by directors: "It is expected that such directors would have attitudes and approaches similar to institutional investors and that the interests of these investors would be protected and promoted by the directors making decisions."(p. 63)

Compared to the enormous amount of research on interlocking directorates in other disciplines, a relatively small amount of attention has been paid to this phenomenon in the field of mass media industry. Dreier and Weinberg (1979) conducted a descriptive analysis on interlocking and found that newspapers were closely tied to the largest American corporations. For example, the Times Mirror Company had more than two dozen interlocks with *Fortune* 1,300 companies and Dow Jones also showed about two dozen interlocks with the nation's largest firms. This study revealed several incidents related to interlocking of directors in which journalistic integrity was sacrificed or outweighed by the mutual interest formed by interlocking.

Chang (1986) analyzed the composition of boards of directors of major media corporations. His study showed a strong and positive correlation between financial dependency and financial directorate ties in 77 media corporations. In addition, he found that stock dispersion was associated with the number of professional managers and that advertising revenue dependency was strongly correlated with directorate ties with advertisers.

Han (1988) also found three resource factors significant to the board composition of 50 media corporations: degree of dependency on major advertisers, extent of financial constraints and market diversification. These factors all had strong and positive relationships with the representation on boards of directors from the corresponding industries. However, these two studies (Chang, 1986; Han, 1988) used samples of major media corporations ranging from broadcast and cable networks to newspapers and magazines. Given the fact that each media industry has distinct features in allocating its resources as well as different market situations, these studies are not sufficient to provide appropriate characteristics of board of directors in the newspaper companies. Furthermore, the ramifications of interlocking in the newspaper industry can be substantially different from other media industries such as cable companies, magazines and broadcast companies, which have been traditionally viewed as entertainment-oriented media rather than the news-oriented. The news media play a unique role in society, and interlocking directorships in the newspaper industry could potentially cause a greater hindrance to the free flow of expression and information than more than for any other media industry.

HYPOTHESES

This study attempts to investigate the composition of boards of directors in publicly-held newspaper companies, particularly their relationship with the financial institutions. From the resource dependency perspective, this study examines how the composition of a board of directors is related to corporate size and financial status.

The co-optation strategy based on resource dependency theory explains that as corporate size increase and market diversification continues, the size of the board of directors correspondingly increases to reduce environmental uncertainty arising from the firm's increased activities (Burt, 1980; Pennings, 1980; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Structural evolution toward concentration and conglomeration increase a company's need for capital (Dreier, 1975). Therefore, this study presents the following hypotheses:

H1a: The bigger the newspaper company, the more members of the board of directors from outside organizations

H1b: The bigger the newspaper company, the more outside board members from financial institutions.

H1c: The bigger the newspaper company, the more board members from banks.

H2: The less financially independent a newspaper company, the higher the ratio of board members from financial institutions to total board members.

Researchers have identified links between stock ownership and board representation based on the monitoring perspective. Murdock and Golding (1979) found that when banks held sufficient shares of stock of a media company, they were usually represented on the company's board of directors. This monitoring perspective explains the direct interlocking transaction between two firms. However, from the resource dependence perspective, this study attempts to see how many financial institutions are represented as board members in the relation to their presence as primary owners holding 5% or more stock of a company. Organizations attempt to co-opt when their environmental uncertainty and need for capital increase. But, what about when they have strong internal connections with financial institutions as primary owners? This study assumes that when a company has a strong connection with financial institutions that hold 5% or more of the company's stock, the firm is unlikely to appoint directors from financial institutions. Thus, the final hypothesis of this study is:

> H3: The higher the percentage of a company's stock owned by financial institutions holding 5% or more of the company's stock, the smaller the ratio of board members from financial institutions to total board members.

METHODS

Data Collection

This study examined 17 publicly-held newspaper companies from 1994 to 1996. In order to smooth out short-term anomalies, three-year averages were used for each of these measures. The 17 companies account for about 20 % of all daily newspapers and 50 % of the newspaper circulation in the U.S. They include the most important newspaper companies in the nation.

Ownership and financial data were collected using *Compact Disclosure* (1997), a database containing information from public documents that publicly owned firms and certain owners must file with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). All of the publicly traded newspaper companies in this study were included in the data base. Specifically, each year's total assets, debt-to-equity ratio, current ratio, return on assets, and institutional ownership were collected. The data regarding boards of directors were collected from each company's *Proxy* and *Annual Report* through the *Lexis/Nexus* service. *Proxy* and *Annual Report* are published annually by each company including information on boards of directors. *Standard & Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives* was used to cross-check the information about the directors and identify financial institutions.

Measurement

Corporate size was measured by total assets. Financial dependency was measured by two ways: debt-to-equity ratio and current ratio. The debt to equity ratio is considered one of the best indicators of dependency of a corporation upon external debt obligations rather than internal sources of capital (Han ,1988). Current ratio is an indicator of the liquidity ability to a firm, measured as current assets divided by current liabilities. The degree of stock ownership by financial institutions was measured as the proportion of the stock value held by financial institutions who own 5% or more stock of a company to the total stock value. Owners of more than 5% of a company are considered to be primary owners and given a great deal of attention by corporate managers; their views and desires carry a great deal of weight (Picard, 1994). This study limited financial institutions' ownership to those owning 5% or more of the company's stock, which are disclosed in the 5% beneficial ownership.

This study treats financial ties in two ways: bank ties and financial ties. Bank ties include only commercial banks' representation on boards, while financial ties includes board members from banks, insurance companies, investment companies, and diversified financial companies. The representation of board members from financial institutions is computed as the number of directors whose principal affiliation is with those institutions.

The representation of board members from outside organizations was defined as board members who do not have direct management roles with the company except for serving on the board, while inside directors were defined as those who have direct management roles within the company beyond the directorship, or those who were identified as having a family connection with the company.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the size and board composition for the 17 newspaper companies. The average number of members of a board of directors was 12.06 (s.d.=3.00). Dow Jones had the biggest board with 16.33 members, while Central Newspapers Co. had the smallest with 8. The average number of outside board members was 7.16 (s.d=3.20). New York Times and Knight-Ridder had very large numbers of outside directors, 12.67 and 12.00 respectively. By contrast, Central Newspapers Co. had just 2 directors from outside organizations.

The average number of board members from financial institutions was 3.20 (s.d=2.08). New York Times and Knight-Ridder, with the two largest boards of directors, also had large numbers of board members from financial institutions, 7.33 and 7.00 respectively. American Media Inc. had just 0.33 directors from financial institutions.

The average number of directors from banks was 0.87 (s.d=.85). American Media Inc., Lee Enterprises, McClatchy Newspapers, Pulitzer Newspapers, Central Newspapers, and Gray Communications Co. did not have any directors affiliated with banks. However, the Tribune company had a relatively large number of directors from banks, 2.33.

Table 1 about here

According to Table 2, the average proportion of financial institutions holding 5% or more of the company's stock was 21.81 % (s.d=24.64). There was a wide range from the maximum of 84.85 % to the minimum of zero. American Media Inc. and Pulitzer Newspapers had very high proportion of stock held by financial institutions, 84.85% and 76.68% respectively. Relatively small portions of Gray Communications, E.W.Scripps and Gannett's stocks were held by financial institutions.

Table 2 about here

Hypothesis 1a was supported. Table 3 shows that there was a significant positive relationship between corporate size (total assets) and the size of the board of directors (r=.586, p= <.05) and the number of directors from outside organizations (r = .533, p = <.05). Larger companies tended to have larger board of directors and outsiders, as evidenced by New York Times and Knight-Ridder.

Hypothesis 1b was not supported by the results. There was no significant relationship between corporate size and the number of directors from financial institutions. However, hypothesis 1c turned out to be significant. There was a very significant positive relationship between the corporate size and the number of directors from banks ($r=.850$, $p<.01$).

Table 3 about here

Hypothesis 2, regarding the relation between companies' financial dependency and the representation of board of directors, was not supported. Table 4 shows that the ratio of directors from financial institutions and banks was not significantly related to the company's debt-to-equity ratio and current ratio.

Table 4 about here

The data supported hypothesis 3. Table 5 show that there was a significant negative relationship ($r=-.492$) between the degree of stockholding by financial institutions and the ratio of directors from financial institutions to total outside directors. That is, those companies in which large amount of stock was held by financial institutions tended to have fewer board members from financial institutions in proportion to total outside directors.

Table 5 about here

DISCUSSION

This study examined whether publicly-held newspaper companies behave like many other U.S. corporations which have been found to have ingrained connections with financial institutions through their boards of directors. The results showed that the newspaper industry shares some features with other U.S. corporations. There was a significant positive relationship between the size of the company and the size of its board of directors, the number of directors from outside, and the number of directors from banks. Relatively large newspaper companies such as Dow Jones, New York Times and Times Mirror had a large number of directors from outside organizations, especially banks, in addition to larger boards. Even though the results were not statistically significant, large newspapers tended to have relatively more directors from financial institutions than did smaller companies. This result supported the view of studies (Bagdikian, 1991; Drier, 1982) which emphasized that media conglomeration increased the need for capital, and as a result increased dependency upon outside funds.

As newspaper companies diversify, the known and unknown risks arising from extended activities increase, which increases the need to reduce environmental uncertainty by co-opting with other organizations. This study revealed that many newspaper companies, like most U.S. corporations, utilize this strategy. The bigger the newspaper company, the greater the need for advisory personnel from outside organizations, particularly banks, therefore, the more connection and mutual interest exists between them. Dreier and Weinberg (1979) provided an illustrative example: Gannett had Wilmot Craig as an outside director. Craig was the retired chairman of Lincoln First, whose

Rochester Bank had lent $4 million to Gannett and was part of the $60 million consortium.

This study identified another relationship between financial institutions as primary owners and the number of board members from financial institutions. Companies in which financial institutions held substantial amounts of stock tended to have fewer directors from financial institutions than those with little financial institution ownership. When the company possesses sufficient financial resources internally, its need for securing access to capital decreases because it has established a relationship with these institutions. For example, American Media Inc. which had average of 0.33 directors from financial institutions and no directors from banks revealed a very high proportion -- about 85 % -- of financial institutions as owners of 5% or more of the company's stock. Pulitzer Newspapers also showed same situation in that its ownership of 5% or more by financial institutions was very high, 76%, but its percentage of board members from financial institutions or banks were very small. Instead, New York Times and Times Mirror which had many directors from financial institutions, showed very low percentages of ownership by financial institutions. This result confirmed the resource dependency perspective, in which the interlocking of directorships is viewed as a strategy of securing necessary resources when company can not generate these resources internally and has uncertainty in obtaining them.

This negative relationship between the presence of financial institutions as primary owners and the number of directors from financial institutions implies an interesting consequence. Despite of the wide range of the representation of financial institutions as board members from company to company, the difference could be offset by considering the presence of financial institutions as owners. Those that had smaller numbers of board members from financial institutions had a relatively large amount of their stock held by financial institutions. By contrast, those that had a great number of directors from financial institutions had little internal connection with financial institutions as owners of 5% or more of their stock. Therefore, this study revealed that financial institutions have a constant and substantial presence in the newspaper organizations, either as a primary stock owner or on the board of directors.

This study did not find a significant relationship between the composition of boards of directors and financial dependency. Much research to date has acknowledged the significant positive relationship between financial dependency and the representation of financial institutions on boards of directors (Allen, 1974; Dooley, 1969; Mizruchi and Stearns, 1988, 1994; Pfeffer, 1972). Two studies (Chang, 1986; Han, 1988) also found a significant positive relationship between members of directors from financial institutions and financial dependency in major media industries including broadcast, cable, magazines, and newspapers. Interestingly, the significant positive relationship which was identified in the whole media industry and other industries did not turn out to be significant when applied to the newspaper industry. Does this mean that the newspaper industry differs from other industries such as broadcast, cable, and magazines? Does it mean that the newspaper industry is still not as responsive to the financial yardstick of Wall Street as other U.S. corporations?

This study examined only 17 publicly-held newspaper companies for a three year period, so the results are of limited generalizability to the newspaper industry as a whole. But this study found that as far as publicly-held newspaper companies are concerned, there was no relationship between financial dependency and enlisting members of the board of directors from the financial world. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen how publicly-traded newspaper companies behave in the face of ever-increasing pressure from Wall Street to be cost effective.

Table 1
Size and Composition of Board of Directors

Company	Total Assets ($ 000)	Average Number of Total Directors	Average Number of Outside Directors	Average Number of Directors from Financial Institutions	Average Number of Directors from Banks
Gannett	5,520,149	11.67	7.33	2.33	2.00
Times Mirror	3,878,076	15.33	9.00	4.33	2.00
New York Times	3,355,735	15.33	12.67	7.33	1.00
Tribune	3,258,326	13.00	8.33	3.67	2.33
Knight-Ridder	2,784,403	15.00	12.00	7.00	1.67
Dow Jones	2,601,365	16.33	9.67	4.00	2.00
Hollinger International	2,379,596	16.00	8.00	2.50	.50
Washington Post	1,741,936	12.67	8.67	6.00	1.00
E.W.Scripps	1,640,176	9.00	3.00	2.00	1.00
A. H. Belo	1,097,295	14.33	10.00	3.33	1.00
Media General	943,130	9.00	5.33	2.67	.33
McClatchy	785,087	13.00	6.33	2.00	.00
American Media	709,398	9.33	2.33	.33	.00
Pulitzers	549,078	9.00	3.00	1.00	.00
Central Newspapers	544,873	8.00	2.00	1.00	.00
Lee Enterprises	520,682	10.00	7.00	1.00	.00
Gray Communication	298,664	8.00	7.00	4.00	.00

* Numbers are three year averages from 1994 to 1996.

Table 2
Proportion of Stockholding by Financial Institutions

Company	% of Stockholding by Financial Institutions (5% or More)	Company	% of Stockholding by Financial Institutions (5% or More)
American Media Inc.	84.85	New York Times	11.02
Pulitzers	76.68	McClatchy	10.61
Media General	44.32	Washington Post	10.30
A.H.Belo	25.61	Hollinger International	9.65
Lee Enterprises	21.82	Times Mirror	8.01
Knight-Ridder	21.36	Gannett	2.90
Tribune	19.23	E.W.Scripps	.00
Dow Jones	13.18	Gray Communications	.00
Central Newspapers	11.29		

Table 3
Comparison of Composition of Boards of Directors

	Total number of directors	Number of outside directors	Number of directors from financial institutions	Number of directors from banks	Total asset
Total number of directors	1.00	.819**	.608**	.622**	.586*
Number of outside directors		1.00	.854**	.580*	.533*
Number of directors from financial institutions			1.00	.521*	.449
Number of directors from banks				1.00	.850**

1) Values are correlation coefficients

2) ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

3) * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4
Comparison of Composition of Boards of Directors with Financial Stability of Company

	Ratio of banks/outsiders[2]	Ratio of banks/total directors[3]	Ratio of financial/outsiders[4]	Ratio of financial/total directors[5]
Current Ratio	-.280(p=.277)	-.289(p=.260)	.069(p=.791)	-.205(p=.430)
Debt to Equity	-.342(p=.179)	-.354(p=.163)	-.370(p=.143)	-.205(p=.430)

1) Expressed as correlation coefficient, with significance in parentheses.

2)Ratio of banks/outsiders is the ratio of directors from banks to directors from outside organizations.

3)Ratio of banks/total directors is the ratio of directors from banks to total number of directors.

4)Ratio of financial/outsiders is the ratio of directors from financial institutions to directors from outside organizations.

5)Ratio of financial/total directors is the ratio of directors from financial institutions to the total number of directors.

Table 5
Comparison of Composition of Board of Directors with Stockholding by Financial Institutions

	Ratio of banks/outsiders	Ratio of banks/total directors	Ratio of financial/outsiders	Ratio of financial/total directors	Ratio of outsiders/total directors[3]
% of Stock holding	-.429 (p=.085)	-.399 (p=.113)	-.492 (p=.045)	-.455 (p=.067)	-.452 (p=.068)

1) Expressed as correlation coefficient, with significance level in parentheses.

2) % of stockholding is proportion of stock held by financial institutions in 5%beneficial ownership to the total stock.

3) Ratio of outsiders/total directors is the ratio of directors from outside organizations to the total number of directors.

REFERENCES

Aldrich, H. (1979). *Organizations and Environments*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Aldrich, H. & Pfeffer, J. (1976). Environments of organization. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2, 79-105.

Allen, M. (1974). The structure of interorganizational elite cooptation: Interlocking corporate directorates. *American Sociological Review,* 39, 393-406.

Bagdikian, B. (1991). *The media monopoly*. Boston: Beacon Press

Blankenburg, W. B., & Ozanich, G. W. (1993). The effects of public ownership on the financial performance of newspaper corporations. *Journalism Quarterly*, 70, 68-75.

Burt, R. S. (1979). A structural theory of interlocking corporate directorates. *Social Networks*, 1, 415-435

Burt, R. S. (1980). On the functional form of corporate cooptation: Empirical findings linking the intensity of market constraint with the frequency of directorate ties. *Social Science Research*, 9, 146-177.

Burt, R. S. (1983). *Corporate profits and cooptation.* New York: Academic Press.

Chang, Y. H. (1986). *Determinants of media corporation board membership: Cooptation and Control.* Unpublished P.h. D. dissertation. University of Minnesota.

Demers, D. P. (1991). Corporate structures and emphasis on profits and product quality at U.S. daily newspapers. *Journalism Quarterly*, 68, 15-26.

Dooley, P. C. (1969). The interlocking directorates. *American Economic Review*, 59, 314-325

Dreier, P. (1975). Power structure and power struggles. *Insurgent Sociologist,* 5, 233-244.

Dreier, P. (1982). The position of the press in the U.S. power structure. *Social Problems*, 29, 298-310.

Dreier, P.,& Weinberg, S. (1979). Interlocking directorates. *Columbia Journalism Review*, 18, 51-68.

Eisenhardt, K. (1989). Agency theory: an assessment and review. *The Academy of Management Review*, 14, 57-74.

Han, K. T. (1988). Composition of boards of directors of major media corporations. *The Journal of Media Economics,* 1(2), 85-100.

Lacy. S., Shaver, M. L., & St. Cyr, C. (1996). The effects of public ownership and newspaper competition on the financial performances of newspaper corporations; a replication and extension. *Journalism Quarterly,* 73(2), 332-341.

McManus J. (1995). A market-based model of news production. *Communication Theory,* 5(4), 301-338.

Meyer, P. & Wearden, S. T. (1984). The effects of public ownership on newspaper companies: A preliminary inquiry. *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 48, 564-577.

Mizruchi, M. (1982). *The American corporate network: 1904-1974.* Beverly Hills: Sage.

Mizruchi, M. (1996). What do interlocks do? An analysis, critique, and assessment of research on interlocking directorates. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 22, 272-328.

Mizruchi, M. & Stearns L.(1988). A longitudinal study of the formation of interlocking directorates. *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 33, 194-210.

Mizruchi, M. & Stearns, L. (1994). A longitudinal study of borrowing by large American corporations. *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 39, 118-140

Mizruchi, M., Potts, B., & Allison D. (1993). Interlocking directorates and business transactions: new evidence on an old question. Annual Meeting of American Sociology Association., Miami Beach.

Murdock, G. & Golding, P. (1979). Capitalism, communication and class relations. *Mass Communication and Society.* Beverly Hills: Sage.

Pennings, J. M. (1980). *Interlocking directorates.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Pfeffer, J. & Salancik, G., (1978). *The external control of organizations.* New York: Harper and Row.

Picard, R. G. (1994). Institutional ownership of publicly traded U.S. newspaper companies. *The Journal of Media Economics,* 7(4), 49-64.

Selznick, P. (1949). *TVA and the grass roots.* New York: Harper and Row.

Parent Company Influence on Local Market Competition in Cellular Telephone

Hugh S. Fullerton, Ph. D.

Department of Public Communication
Sam Houston State University
Huntsville, Texas 77341

Phone: (409) 294-1522
E-mail: scm_hsf@shsu.edu

Prepared for presentation to the
Media Management & Economics Division
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
1998

Parent Company Influence on Local Market Competition in Cellular Telephone

Hugh S. Fullerton, Ph. D.

Department of Public Communication
Sam Houston State University
Huntsville, Texas 77341

ABSTRACT

The duopoly market structure of the cellular telephone industry provides conditions under which competition can occur. However, large telephone companies own multiple cellular systems. To determine the extent to which these companies influence competition on the local level, four indicators of competitive behavior were compared over a seven-year period in the first 30 markets. The study concludes that cellular affiliates owned by the same company tend to use similar competitive strategies. Different companies, however, utilize differing competitive strategies at the local level.

Parent Company Influence on Local Market Competition in Cellular Telephone

Hugh S. Fullerton, Ph. D.
Sam Houston State University

As the Federal Communications Commission and state regulatory agencies grope for ways to encourage competition in telecommunications, it is becoming increasingly clear that deregulation by itself is not a panacea. The FCC has found that it must write thousands of pages of rules to guide the transition of telecommunications from a highly regulated monopoly industry to a relatively free, competitive marketplace. Different segments of the industry, like wireless telephony, cable, and satellite, may require different approaches. Regulators are becoming increasingly aware that they lack the information possessed by the firms they regulate, and therefore are hampered in their policy making and oversight functions (Laffont & Tirole, 1993). The regulators are also hampered by multiple, sometimes conflicting, objectives. In addition to attempting to design regimes to promote price competition, regulators and policy makers must insure that service quality is maintained, universal access is facilitated, and needs of small users are addressed. Thus, the task becomes far more complicated than just eliminating regulation and allowing the free market to determine the results.

In an early attempt to reduce regulation, the FCC created a two-firm or duopoly market structure in several hundred new cellular telephone markets in the U. S. Although the decision to go with the duopoly structure seems to have been made as much on political grounds as economic ones,[1] the result is an unusual laboratory for the study of firm behavior in a duopoly situation.

When it created the local duopoly structure, the FCC appeared to be signaling that one firm in each market should be owned by the established wireline telephone company, and the other by an independent provider.[2] In the metropolitan markets, however, a pattern soon developed that many of the non-wireline cellular providers would be owned by other large, multimarket telephone firms, not local startups.

Of the non-wireline services in the first 30 metropolitan markets to be opened for cellular in the mid-1980s, seven were operated by subsidiaries of traditional telephone companies that provided local wireline service in their home regions, and eight were run by McCaw Cellular, a major national player in the cellular telephone industry. So only half of the non-wireline vendors in the first 30 markets could be considered independent, more-or-less local firms. Thus, in nearly one-fourth of these original large markets, we see the spectacle of the entrenched local phone company operating one cellular system, and facing competition from a "non-wireline" vendor that is a subsidiary of another telephone giant from a different region of the country. Another quarter of the markets had non-wireline vendors backed by a large national competitor that specialized in cellular service.

Although far from perfect competition, duopoly market structure offers at least the possibility of competition, and the benefits to the consumer that competition might offer. In decreeing that local cellular markets would be duopolies, the FCC was attempting to substitute competition for regulatory oversight as a means of protecting public interests. The first 30 metro markets, however, often proved to be local battlegrounds for corporate giants, not separate prizefights between local players. Since large phone companies dominated these markets, the influence of the parent firms on competition at the local level becomes an important issue.

This paper will be concerned with the influence that corporate ownership might have on the competitive behavior of the duopoly operators at the local level. Using a proprietary data set which includes all firms entering the original 30 markets during the first seven years of cellular phone service (A History of Cellular Airtime Pricing, January 1985-January 1991), comparisons across the period can be made of several types of behavior that could be considered competitive. To investigate the question of corporate influence on local competitive behavior, the study will test the following:

Hypothesis: Local cellular phone firms will tend to show similar patterns of strategic competitive behavior if they are owned by the same parent company.

Literature Review

Competition, being an abstract, can be difficult to pin down. Economists and policy makers use the term freely, yet they are not necessarily talking about the same thing. Even when the concept is agreed upon, it is difficult to put in tangible terms. How do we know when competition is taking place? The disparity in meaning is discussed by Brenner (1987), who notes that the economists' view of competition is a long way from that held by the typical business executive. Competition in economic terms is a situation with so many firms that the individual firm has little or no influence over prices. The businessman, however, sees competition as a rivalry situation, and the outcome depends very much on the skill of business management in performing better than its rivals in the marketplace. Adams (1990) observes that the term competition is used both in reference to specific market structure and to the activity between competitors.

As Brenner explains it: "Businessmen pursue strategies to discover a combination of customers and services with respect to which they have an advantage over those whom they perceive as their competitors." (1997, p. 49)

From the business perspective, competition is a game, albeit a very serious one.[3] As far as the consumer is concerned, the best situation could be to have very strenuous competition, in the business sense, in order the force prices to their lowest levels, insure high quality service, and encourage innovation.

Research on competitive behavior has been divided generally into three areas: pricing actions, product actions, and advertising aimed at differentiation (Smith, Grimm & Gannon, 1992). Product actions in cellular telephone are limited by technical and market considerations, but firms are free to apply price actions at the market level, as well as employ advertising intended to establish an advantage on the basis of firm reputation or service superiority. This study examines both price actions and actions related to products and promotion.

Basic business strategy and corporate culture of the parent firm are considered important determinants of the firm's behavior (Smith, Grimm & Gannon, 1992; Pearce & Robinson, 1985; Kotter & Heskett, 1992; Whittington, 1993). Kotter and Heskett note that corporate culture may take its lead from the pattern set by top management, but it also reflects what is done at the level of lower units, such as divisions. They discern no set pattern regarding the relative influence of top management and the smaller unit in setting common values or behavioral norms. Their studies show, however, the organizational culture has a strong role in the performance of the corporation. In particular, corporate cultures that inhibit change, and therefore restrict growth and adaptation, can serve to limit the long range success of the organization.

The firm's culture, in turn, may determine whether a strategy coming from top management is successful or not. If the strategy is consistent with the culture, or if the culture can adapt to the strategy, the firm may be successfully implement the strategy and ultimately achieve the desired goals. If the culture and strategy are at odds, the strategy is likely to be undermined.

Duopoly often is presented as a simplified form of oligopoly, and used to test and demonstrate various aspects of oligopoly theory. In the real world, however, duopoly exists only occasionally, and most duopoly markets are not thoroughly isolated from overlapping markets. A town may have two shoe stores, for instance, but the residents can patronize optional sources if they drive out of town or shop by catalog. Under such conditions, it is difficult to test theories of duopoly or oligopoly using empirical means.[4] Local markets cellular markets, however, are well-defined duopolies with no competition from outside and, at least until recently, no close substitute services.

Duopoly markets in cellular telephone create conditions under which spirited competitive behavior can take place (Fullerton, 1998). This study examined competitive behaviors, including pricing, in the first 30 markets to offer cellular service in the U.S. (For analytical purposes, the markets were collapsed to 28, because in two cases, both the competing firms and their prices were identical in contiguous markets) In most of the markets, prices declined over the initial six-year period, on an inflation-adjusted basis. However, behavior patterns of the competing firms varied widely from market to market. In some markets, there appeared to be vigorous price competition. Other markets showed little evidence of price competition, but exhibited other types of behavior which could be considered competitive, such as offering service enhancements to suggest product differentiation, and targeting market segments with special pricing packages. These findings suggest that factors other than market structure influence both the type of competitive strategies that firms adopt and the intensity with which firms compete in a particular market.

Adams (1990) examined entry strategy in cellular markets from the perspective of rivalry theory. The markets he studied showed that cellular firms changed pricing strategies frequently, but he found no support for rivalry theory based hypotheses in the determination of competitive behavior.

Ruiz (1994), using an extensive data set from a single time period, tested hypotheses on the effects of product differentiation, capacity constraints, regulation, and multimarket interaction on cellular telephone pricing. She did not find statistical support for hypotheses related to regulation, product differentiation or multimarket interaction. Tests for the effect of capacity constraints produced contradictory results.

Neoclassical economic theory says that a duopoly makes it possible to have competition, and therefore lower prices, than a monopoly, but that prices will be higher than would be the case under conditions of perfect competition.[5] Recent analyses indicate that the degree of competition within an oligopoly (of which duopoly is a special case) will be related to the disposition of firm managements toward cooperation or strenuous rivalry. (Adams, 1990; Shapiro, 1989; Smith, Grimm & Gannon, 1992)

Neoclassical theory, however, has difficulty dealing with a more complex situation where a relatively small number of companies engage in an industry on a national scale, but face each other only through duopoly local markets. In the case of cellular telephone in the early metro markets, a large firm would face one competitor in one local market, but a different competitor in a different market. Competitor #1 might be inclined to passively accept prices set by another firm, while competitor #2 might prefer to use aggressive action to expand market share. It was a bit like a barroom brawl in an old Western movies, where the hero knocks out one outlaw on one side, only to turn around and find a different one coming at him from a different direction.

The intensity of competition, however, may depend less on market structure than on the attitudes and perceptions of the market participants. Brenner characterizes this distinction as subjective on the part of firm managers, depending on whether the firms' decision makers consider other firms as rivals or perceive threats of market entry. Absent these views, an oligopolistic market may not show characteristics of strong competition.

Methodology

Basic business strategy and corporate culture of the parent firm are considered important determinants of the firm's behavior (Smith, Grimm & Gannon, 1992; Pearce & Robinson, 1985; Kotter & Heskett, 1992). If the corporate influence extends these factors to the local level, cellular affiliates owned by the same parent company should show similar patterns of competitive behavior, such as the following:

Pricing actions:

1. Aggressive reduction of cellular phone prices, or conversely, resisting the reduction of prices.
2. Undercutting rates offered by the competing firm in the market.

Product and promotional actions:

1. Offering more service features, especially such enhancements offered without extra charges.

2. Offering more pricing plans, to appeal to more segments of the market.

Data that reflect each of these four competitive behaviors were used to construct measures reflecting the intensity of the behaviors. Three different pricing packages were designed to determine the representative per-minute price for three customer profiles: Small, occasional customers, using 50 minutes or less per month; medium-use customers, using 200 minutes per month; large customers, using 500 minutes per month. These rates were extracted for each profile for each firm for each year. Although some customers use far more than 500 minutes per month, in most markets and at most points in time the package that best served the 500-minute customer also best served larger customers. The customer price data were then used to construct measures of the four types of competitive behavior:

Price Performance Index

The Price Performance Index (PPI) was constructed to measure the price performance of each firm, adjusted for inflation as reflected in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The PPI is computed for each year except the initial one, comparing that year's price for each customer profile with the year preceding. This comparison is then adjusted for that year's increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The sign is reversed, so that prices that decrease have a positive sign, and those that rise are negative. Although price performance is a not necessarily a direct sign of competitive behavior, cellular firms in the Fullerton (1996) study generally reduced prices over the six-year period.

Price Difference Rating

The gap between prices charged by competing firms is an indication of their respective competitive strategies. Fullerton noted that price differences were frequent in some cellular markets and rare or nonexistent in others. Neoclassical economics focuses on pricing strategy as both a technique of vendors and a signaling mechanism to other participants and observers. If a company is attempting to wrest market share from its competitor, we would expect it to use pricing strategy as a major tool.

Pricing strategy can serve other purposes, of course. If demand is inelastic, profits can be increased by increasing prices. In complex situations, firms may choose to manipulate prices, taking into consideration the possible strategic responses of their competitors (Brenner, 1987; Rasmusen, 1994).

The gaps between the prices that competing firms charge for comparable services may indicate their attempts to outmaneuver their competitors, while trying to maintain or increase profits. The size and persistence of price differences is one sign of the intensity of competition in a market, and the relative position of each participating firm is an indicator of its own competitive strategy.

Differences between posted prices for comparable service bundles of the two competing firms were tracked in each of the 30 cellular markets.[6] A difference of 10 percent of the lower firm's price was arbitrarily selected as being significant and therefore indicative of serious competition. The study recorded the number of times at which a 10 percent or more difference in price was recorded at each service level, and which firm posted the higher price at each point.

The 60 local operations were classified according to the following Price Difference Rating (PDR) classifications:

No Competition (NC): Prices for comparable service classes less than 10 percent different on at least 90 percent of reporting dates. Prices identical on at least 50 percent of reporting dates.

Low Competition (LC-1, LC-2, LC-M): Price differences of less than 10 percent on at least 90 percent of reporting dates, but different on more than 50 percent of dates. Firms designated LC-1 reported higher prices on 50 percent or more of reporting dates. M indicates neither firm consistently posted higher prices.

Moderate Competition (MC-1, MC-2, MC-M): Price differences of at least 10 percent on 10 percent to 59 percent of reporting dates. Firms designated MC-1 had higher prices on 50 percent or more of reporting dates. M indicates neither firm consistently posted higher prices.

High Competition (HC-1, HC-2, HC-M): Price differences of at least 10 percent on 60 percent or more of reporting dates. Firms designated HC-1 had higher prices on 50 percent or more of reporting dates. M indicates neither firm consistently posted higher prices.

Restated, the coding designations are as follows:

NC	No significant price competition in market.
LC-1	Firm posting higher prices in market with low price competition.
LC-2	Firm posting lower prices in market with low price competition.
LC-M	Market with low price competition, no firm consistently high or low.
MC-1	Firm posting higher prices in market with moderate price competition.
MC-2	Firm posting lower prices in market with moderate price competition.
MC-M	Market with moderate price competition, no firm consistently high or low.
HC-1	Firm posting higher prices in market with high price competition.
HC-2	Firm posting lower prices in market with high price competition.
HC-M	Market with high price competition, no firm consistently high or low.

Number of Pricing Plans

Most cellular firms began business with a small number of pricing plans, usually no more than three, and often only one. In their efforts to segment their customers into identifiable groups, virtually all firms substantially increased the number of pricing plans, until several were offering eight or more. In some cases, firms reduced the number of pricing plans after several years.

Use of multiple pricing plans is typical of a market segmentation strategy, and has often been applied in other utility and transportation industries. Segmentation may be used as a competitive strategy, or as a strategy to delineate niche markets or strengthen price levels by taking advantage of inelastic demand.

The absolute number of pricing plans offered by each firm at the retail level was used as the pricing plan indicator.

Free Features Index

During the early expansion period of cellular, it became increasingly common for firms to offer optional extra features as enhancements to their services. Examples of these enhancements are call waiting, call forwarding, voice mail, and special billing. In many cases, these were comparatively simple and inexpensive software upgrades, but customers found them to be of value. By the end of the period, all 56 firms were offering a variety of such special features, and many offered 8 to 10 or more. In some cases, vendors charged extra for such features, but many were also offered free, presumably for promotional purposes.

Because cellular service is quite standardized, operating within rigid technical constraints, it is difficult to differentiate the product. Offering special features, especially without charge, may be regarded as one method of differentiating a service from its competitor.

The free special feature strategy is operationalized in the Free Features Index (FFI). This simple index is computed by dividing the number of services offered free by the total number of special services offered. The higher the index, the more vigorously the firm is attempting to differentiate its service by offering free service enhancements.

Following computation of the four measures, the 56 local cellular firms in the first 30 markets are rank ordered on the basis of the Price Performance Index, the Number of Pricing Plans, and the Free Features Index. The firms are also classified according to the Price Difference Ratings. Results are shown in Tables 1-3.

Findings

Eleven firms owned more than one local cellular system each in the first 30 markets, and the number of local system affiliates under a single ownership ranged from two to eight. Seven of the companies owning more than one system were regional Bell operating companies (RBOCs). The others were General Telephone & Electronics, which also operated local wireline phone systems, McCaw Cellular, the largest national operator of cellular systems at the time, and two smaller companies, Bay Area Cellular and Cellular Communications, each of which owned just two systems in the initial 30 markets. Three of the RBOCs also owned a total of seven non-wireline cellular systems in markets outside their home regions.

All of the RBOCs and GTE operated local wireline systems in their home territories. The largest multiple owner, however, was McCaw Cellular with eight systems, all non-wireline. The average number of local systems owned by multiple owner firms was 4.45.

In exactly half of the 30 markets, the non-wireline systems were owned by independent firms, meaning they were not RBOCs, nor were they GTE or McCaw affiliates. No wireline systems were owned by independents, which is to be expected.

A market-by-market examination of the competitive behaviors of the local cellular systems affiliated with major corporations shows the following:

Ameritech affiliates tended to be among the highest priced in their respective markets, yet over time, they were among those reducing prices the most. In three of their four markets, Ameritech affiliates ranked in the upper half of all cellular firms in the steady reduction of prices over the six-year period. The same three markets were rated highly competitive in the Price Difference ratings, but the Ameritech affiliate was always the higher priced of the two firms. The fourth Ameritech market was rated noncompetitive on the Price Difference ratings, and the firm there was in the lowest-performing quartile on the Price Performance Index. Three of the four were in the top quartile in the Number of Pricing Plans offered, and all were near the middle on the FFI scale.

Bell Atlantic's four local cellular affiliates in this study all rated in the lower half on the PPI scale, indicating they reduced prices less than the majority of other firms in the original 30 markets. Two of Bell Atlantic's three cellular firms operated in markets which were noncompetitive on the PDR, but the other was the lower-priced firm in a moderately competitive market. All Bell Atlantic affiliates were in the top quartile on the FFI, because they made liberal use of free features.

All three **BellSouth** affiliates were in the top half of firms on the PPI, so all three made substantial price reductions over the period. All three were in the lower half both in the number of pricing plans offered and on the FFI, showing that they were less likely than most to use non-price-related competitive tactics. Their record on the PDR was mixed.

GTE owned wireline cellular providers in seven markets (considering San Francisco-San Jose as two markets). In all of those markets except San Francisco-San Jose, the GTE vendor was in the first or second quartile on the PPI list, indicating that prices were reduced substantially over the six-year period. On the Price Difference Ratings, however, GTE affiliates rated all the way from NC (no competition) to HC-2 (lower priced competitor in a highly competitive market), the two extremes on this measure. In number of plans, GTE affiliates were generally toward the low end, with six of the seven affiliates in the third or fourth quartiles. GTE affiliates were also spread on the FFI index, with two affiliates each in quartiles 1 and 3 and three in the second quartile.

The local affiliates of **McCaw Cellular**, the only company exclusively operating cellular systems on a nationwide basis in the early years, showed no discernible patterns of competitive behavior. It should be noted that McCaw operated only non-wireline systems, and therefore often entered a market after the local phone company had a well-established cellular system. On all three numerical scales, McCaw affiliates fell into every quartile. The markets where McCaw operated rated from highly competitive to non-competitive on the Price Difference Ratings. The McCaw affiliate in Portland was highest in the nation on the PPI, showing the greatest reduction in prices over the period it was in business. Yet the same affiliate tied for last place on the FFI. Only in the number of pricing plans offered did McCaw affiliates show some consistency, with six of its eight affiliates in the top half.

NYNEX's three affiliates, all in the Northeast, followed a fairly conservative pattern. All were in the middle of the pack on price reductions and free features. Only the Buffalo affiliate was in the top quartile in the number of pricing plans offered. Two of the three were involved on moderately competitive markets. but were neither consistently high nor low. The New York affiliate operated in a highly competitive market, where it was the higher priced firm.

PacTel was one of the three RBOCs that also operated non-wireline systems outside of its home region. Both of its wireline affiliates were in California, a state that had a curiously poor record of competitive performance (Fullerton, 1998). Its two non-wireline affiliates were in Atlanta and Detroit, two very different markets. Atlanta was a noncompetitive market, the only one of the 30 with completely identical prices during the period two firms were active. Atlanta prices were also stable, which means that, adjusting for inflation, they went down only moderately. PacTel's Atlanta affiliate ranked first in the country on the FFI, and very high on the number of price plans offered. The Detroit market was a highly competitive one according to the Price Differences Ratings, and the PacTel affiliate was the lower priced vendor. However, this did not result in substantially declining prices. Although the Ameritech competitor reduced prices at several junctures, the PacTel affiliate raised prices on several occasions as well as reducing them. As a result, the PacTel affiliate in Detroit ranked 44th in the country on the PPI.

Southwestern Bell moved into non-wireline aggressively, complementing its three wireline affiliates with four out-of-region non-wireline firms (considering Baltimore and Washington as separate markets). The strategies used by its wireline affiliates seem to be quite different from the non-wireline ones, however. The three wireline systems were in the bottom half of all firms on the PPI, the FFI, and the number of pricing plans. Two of their markets were noncompetitive. The third one was the higher priced firm in a moderately competitive market. The non-wireline affiliates, however, ranked generally higher by all four standards of comparison. Two were in the top half on the PPI, two were in the top half in number pricing plans, and all four operated in moderately competitive or highly competitive markets, as judged by the PDR. Since the Price Difference Rating is heavily influenced by the interaction of the two firms in a market, it can be inferred that Southwestern Bell's entry was an important factor in making those four markets competitive.

US West operated four wireline affiliates and one non-wireline system, in San Diego. By most measures, its affiliates were near the middle, but rarely in the bottom quartile. Three of its affiliates were in the top quartile on the FFI. According to the Price Difference Ratings, four of the markets served by US West were highly competitive, and one moderately competitive. In two of these markets, the US West affiliate was the lower priced firm, and in two other markets, neither firm was consistently the lower one. The conclusion can be drawn that US West affiliates actively pursued a practice of adjusting prices for competitive reasons.

The 13 **independent** firms (one serving two contiguous service areas in the San Francisco Bay area and one serving two Ohio markets) had very mixed records. Since all of them faced systems affiliated with RBOCs or GTE, this is not surprising, as they had the task of adjusting their competitive strategies to a well-known local competitor. In terms of the PPI, seven were in the top half of all firms and six in the lower half. Six were in the upper half in numbers of pricing plans offered, and seven in the lower half. Five were in the upper half by the FFI, eight in the lower half. Seven were in markets deemed noncompetitive in terms of the Price Difference Ratings, yet five were in highly competitive markets. Four of those five in highly competitive markets were the lower-priced firms in their markets.

Discussion

Although the samples for each company are limited in number, and the behaviors quite idiosyncratic in nature, two patterns are quite apparent:

1. Affiliates owned by a particular parent company often share characteristic competitive behaviors.

2. There are substantial differences in typical competitive behavior between affiliates downed by different companies.

In general, we surmise that affiliates of Ameritech, Bell Atlantic and NYNEX tended to be quite conservative in nature. These companies' affiliates generally posted higher prices than their competitors in the same markets, and reduced prices less dramatically than other firms during the period under study. BellSouth affiliates were not very competitive, but they did reduce prices more than most over the six-year period.

Affiliates of GTE were more aggressive in general, participating in markets with higher levels of competition and reducing prices more than many others. McCaw Cellular affiliates also showed signs of vigorous competition, but price reductions varied by market. In general, the practices of McCaw affiliates were less consistent than affiliates of RBOCs and GTE.

Affiliates of PacTel, Southwestern Bell and US West resisted price reductions more than most others, yet they participated in many markets where price differences often indicated high or moderate competition. All three firms also operated non-wireline as well as wireline related systems. In most cases, their wireline systems were more conservative than their non-wireline affiliates.

No generalizations can be made about independent local operators. Some exhibited very competitive behavior, while others showed few signs of competitive behavior. In competitive markets, the non-wireline systems were much more likely to be the lower priced firm.

Conclusions

Corporate ownership appears to have a substantial influence on the tendency of local cellular systems to behave in various manners indicative of competition.

In the case of most of the RBOCs and GTE in the first 30 American cellular markets, the competitive behaviors of local affiliates showed strong similarities when they were owned by the same parent firm. Some local affiliates operated in very conservative fashion, others were more aggressive in their competitive behaviors. Some were prone to use price-related competitive tactics, while others relied more on service or marketing-oriented techniques. Available data do not indicate whether these behavioral similarities were associated with intentional strategies on the part of the parent companies, or whether local affiliates adopted patterns of behavior consistent with the parent firms' corporate cultures.

Local vendors not affiliated with RBOCs or GTE exhibited no such similarities, however. Affiliates of McCaw Cellular were strikingly dissimilar in patterns of competitive behavior, as were the 13 independent firms that provided non-wireline service in 15 markets.

Further research

At least one avenue remains to be explored in efforts to explain patterns of competitive behavior by local cellular telephone providers. This is the possibility that the timing of entry into the local market may play a role. The first mover advantage is often cited in game theory literature, as is the role of price-taker in the oligopoly literature. In the case of local cellular markets, a lag of anywhere from a few months to a year or more often occurred between the time that the first vendor offered service and its competitor became operational in the market. In most cases, the first vendor to offer cellular was also the affiliate of the local wireline phone service provider, and probably benefited from the regional reputation of the parent firm.

Notes

[1] For accounts of the FCC cellular duopoly market decision, see Calhoun, 1988; Davis, 1988; and Hardman, 1982.

[2] Although most "wireline" providers are owned by the local wireline telephone company serving the market, a few declined to operate the cellular wireline-affiliated systems in their service areas and allowed other firms to do so. None of the local telephone companies in the first 30 metropolitan markets declined to provide cellular service, however.

[3] Game theory might offer some insights into the behavior of local cellular telephone vendors. See Rasmusen (1994) for a readable, applied introductory review of game theory. Note especially the discussion of pricing under duopoly market structure in Chapter 13. Game theory is considered to have been established as a area of academic research by Von Neumann and Morgenstern (1944).

[4] For example, Friedman (1983) uses duopoly examples frequently in his comprehensive work on oligopoly, but rarely treats it as a distinct case. Others, such as Anderson and Engers (1992), and Geroski, Phlips, and Ulph (1985), examine theoretical aspects of oligopoly and duopoly. Among the few data-based studies of duopoly are Ng (1991), and Hazlett (1990). Stoetzer and Tewes (1996), examine the German cellular telephone case, which is made somewhat imprecise by the availability of possible substitute technologies.

[5] Friedman, op cit., examines the leadership models that may characterize duopoly, including the Cournot, Bertrand and Stackelberg models. Under the Cournot model, firms in a duopoly would produce more than a firm under monopoly but less than those under perfect competition. Price should be less than the monopoly price and more than the pure competition price. Oligopoly profits are higher under Cournot conditions than under Stackelberg (Anderson and Engers, op. cit.). Product differentiation or other non-price competition may blunt the impact of price competition, to the point that a firm may successfully ignore its competitors' behavior in setting price or output (Geroski, Phlips & Ulph, op. cit.). Even if price competition in a duopoly is not anticipated, consumer surplus should be greater than what it would have been under a monopoly, because duopolistic firms will still compete on the basis of service (Ng, op. cit.). Friedman notes that the nature of the industry determines which model is the best approximation of the actual situation. Some types of businesses find it relatively easy to adjust prices, but may be limited by high fixed capacity or high costs of adjusting output. Other industries may find it comparatively easy to adjust output, and have relatively less price flexibility. In the case of the Stackelberg model, industry structure and culture may indicate a dominant firm which is likely to behave like the leader. Different firms in an industry may take the role of leader at different times.

[6] In some markets, the period for which prices are compared is less than six years, because the firms did not begin operations at the same time.

Table 1. Summary of Findings by Market

	Owner	Price Perf. Index	PPI Rank	Price Diff. Rating	Ave. No. Plans	Number of Plans Rank	Free Feat. Index	FFI Rank
ATLANTA - WL	BellSouth	6.40	11	NC	3.86	38 (tie)	0.13	47
ATLANTA - NWL	PacTel	4.77	24 (tie)	NC	5.75	10	0.90	1
BALT-WASH - WL	Bell Atlantic	1.40	49	MC-2	5.57	14 (tie)	0.59	12
BALT-WASH - NWL	SW Bell	5.78	18	MC-1	6.86	3	0.53	15
BOSTON - WL	NYNEX	3.04	5	MC-M	5.00	18 (tie)	0.26	41
BOSTON - NWL	SW Bell	7.63	41	MC-M	3.71	41	0.33	33 (tie)
BUFFALO - WL	NYNEX	3.67	38	MC-M	5.86	6 (tie)	0.36	28 (tie)
BUFFALO - NWL	Buffalo Tel	1.29	50 (tie)	MC-M	5.57	14 (tie)	0.25	42 (tie)
CHICAGO - WL	Ameritech	8.90	4	HC-1	5.71	11 (tie)	0.35	30
CHICAGO - NWL	SW Bell	4.30	30	HC-2	5.57	14 (tie)	0.30	39 (tie)
CINCINNATI - WL	Ameritech	2.24	47	NC	6.17	5	0.45	19 (tie)
CINCINNATI - NWL	Cell. Comm.	1.29	50 (tie)	NC	3.80	40	0.07	49 (tie)
CLEVELAND - WL	GTE	6.32	13	LC-M	2.57	51 (tie)	0.34	31 (tie)
CLEVELAND - NWL	Cell. Comm.	3.93	35	LC-M	3.00	46 (tie)	0.34	31 (tie)
DALLAS - WL	SW Bell	2.36	46	NC	2.57	51 (tie)	0.09	48
DALLAS - NWL	Metrocell	6.88	7	NC	4.80	21 (tie)	0.51	16
DENVER - WL	US West	4.11	33	HC-M	4.00	36 (tie)	0.74	5
DENVER - NWL	McCaw	6.08	16	HC-M	5.00	18 (tie)	0.32	35 (tie)
DETROIT - WL	Ameritech	6.00	17	HC-1	5.86	6 (tie)	0.37	27
DETROIT - NWL	PacTel	2.56	44	HC-2	4.50	24	0.05	51
HOUSTON - WL	GTE	7.23	6	HC-2	4.29	26 (tie)	0.39	24
HOUSTON - NWL	Houston Cell.	4.48	28	HC-1	3.00	46 (tie)	0.17	46
INDIANAPOLIS - WL	GTE	6.48	9	HC-M	4.14	30 (tie)	0.31	37 (tie)
INDIANAPOLIS - NWL	Ind'polis Cell.	9.23	2	HC-M	5.71	11 (tie)	0.31	37 (tie)
KANSAS CITY - WL	SW Bell	1.60	48	MC-1	4.14	30 (tie)	0.24	44
KANSAS CITY - NWL	McCaw	6.30	14	MC-2	5.80	9	0.00	52 (tie)
LOS ANGELES - WL	PacTel	-2.21	54	NC	7.43	1	0.40	23
LOS ANGELES - NWL	LA Cellular	4.77	24 (tie)	NC	7.00	2	0.32	35 (tie)
MIAMI - WL	BellSouth	5.72	19	MC-M	4.00	36 (tie)	0.00	52 (tie)
MIAMI - NWL	McCaw	2.52	45	MC-M	6.25	4	0.00	52 (tie)
MILWAUKEE - WL	Ameritech	4.65	26	HC-1	4.29	26 (tie)	0.36	28 (tie)
MILWAUKEE - NWL	Mil'kee Cell.	4.52	27	HC-2	4.14	30 (tie)	0.00	52 (tie)
MINNEAPOLIS - WL	US West	6.47	10	HC-2	3.57	42	0.55	14
MINNEAPOLIS - NWL	McCaw	4.35	29	HC-1	4.57	23	0.64	9

NEW ORLEANS - WL	BellSouth	6.36	12	LC-1	3.29	44	0.30	39 (tie)
NEW ORLEANS - NWL	Radiofone	4.18	32	LC-2	2.33	53	0.38	25 (tie)
NEW YORK - WL	NYNEX	5.61	21	HC-1	4.14	30 (tie)	0.44	21 (tie)
NEW YORK - NWL	Metro One	3.92	36	HC-2	3.00	46 (tie)	0.63	10
PHILADELPHIA - WL	Bell Atlantic	0.58	52	NC	4.86	20	0.75	4
PHILADELPHIA - NWL	Metrophone	3.32	40	NC	4.80	21 (tie)	0.50	17
PHOENIX - WL	US West	3.39	39	HC-1	4.29	26 (tie)	0.45	19 (tie)
PHOENIX - NWL	Metro Mobile	6.29	15	HC-2	3.20	45	0.89	2
PITTSBURGH - WL	Bell Atlantic	4.05	34	NC	3.86	38 (tie)	0.67	8
PITTSBURGH - NWL	McCaw	9.02	3	NC	4.25	29	0.62	11
PORTLAND - WL	GTE	5.71	20	MC-M	2.83	50	0.80	3
PORTLAND - NWL	McCaw	11.88	1	MC-M	5.50	17	0.00	52 (tie)
ST. LOUIS - WL	SW Bell	3.90	37	NC	4.14	30 (tie)	0.07	49 (tie)
ST. LOUIS - NWL	Cybertel	5.60	22	NC	5.86	6 (tie)	0.21	45
SAN DIEGO - WL	PacTel	-1.11	53	HC-1	3.50	43	0.25	42 (tie)
SAN DIEGO - NWL	US West	6.56	8	HC-2	1.20	56	0.71	6
SAN FRAN-S'JOSE WL	GTE	-2.71	55	NC	2.17	54	0.47	18
SAN FRAN-S'JOSE NWL	Bay Area Cel.	-3.09	56	NC	1.80	55	0.44	21 (tie)
SEATTLE - WL	US West	2.73	42	MC-M	4.14	30 (tie)	0.68	7
SEATTLE - NWL	McCaw	2.73	43	MC-M	5.67	13	0.33	33 (tie)
TAMPA - WL	GTE	4.98	23	MC-M	4.43	25	0.58	13
TAMPA - NWL	McCaw	4.24	31	MC-M	3.00	46 (tie)	0.38	25 (tie)
Mean of all firms		4.34			4.40		0.40	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 2. Summary of Findings by Parent Corporation

Owner		Price Perf. Index	PPI Rank	Price Diffe Rating	Ave. No. Plans	Number of Plans Rank	Free Feat. Index	FFI Rank
Ameritech	CHICAGO - WL	8.90	4	HC-1	5.71	11 (tie)	0.35	30
4 WL	CINCINNATI - WL	2.24	47	NC	6.17	5	0.45	19 (tie)
	DETROIT - WL	6.00	17	HC-1	5.86	6 (tie)	0.37	27
	MILWAUKEE - WL	4.65	26	HC-1	4.29	26 (tie)	0.36	28 (tie)
Bell Atlantic	BALT-WASH - WL	1.40	49	MC-2	5.57	14 (tie)	0.59	12
4 WL	PHILADELPHIA - WL	0.58	52	NC	4.86	20	0.75	4
	PITTSBURGH - WL	4.05	34	NC	3.86	38 (tie)	0.67	8
BellSouth	ATLANTA - WL	6.40	11	NC	3.86	38 (tie)	0.13	47
3 WL	MIAMI - WL	5.72	19	MC-M	4.00	36 (tie)	0.00	52 (tie)
	NEW ORLEANS - WL	6.36	12	LC-1	3.29	44	0.30	39 (tie)
GTE	CLEVELAND - WL	6.32	13	LC-M	2.57	51 (tie)	0.34	31 (tie)
7 WL	HOUSTON - WL	7.23	6	HC-2	4.29	26 (tie)	0.39	24
	INDIANAPOLIS - WL	6.48	9	HC-M	4.14	30 (tie)	0.31	37 (tie)
	PORTLAND - WL	5.71	20	MC-M	2.83	50	0.80	3
	SAN FRAN-S'JOSE WL	-2.71	55	NC	2.17	54	0.47	18
	TAMPA - WL	4.98	23	MC-M	4.43	25	0.58	13
McCaw	DENVER - NWL	6.08	16	HC-M	5.00	18 (tie)	0.32	35 (tie)
8 NWL	KANSAS CITY - NWL	6.30	14	MC-2	5.80	9	0.00	52 (tie)
	MIAMI - NWL	2.52	45	MC-M	6.25	4	0.00	52 (tie)
	MINNEAPOLIS - NWL	4.35	29	HC-1	4.57	23	0.64	9
	PITTSBURGH - NWL	9.02	3	NC	4.25	29	0.62	11
	PORTLAND - NWL	11.88	1	MC-M	5.50	17	0.00	52 (tie)
	SEATTLE - NWL	2.73	43	MC-M	5.67	13	0.33	33 (tie)
	TAMPA - NWL	4.24	31	MC-M	3.00	46 (tie)	0.38	25 (tie)
NYNEX	BOSTON - WL	3.04	5	MC-M	5.00	18 (tie)	0.26	41
3 WL	BUFFALO - WL	3.67	38	MC-M	5.86	6 (tie)	0.36	28 (tie)
	NEW YORK - WL	5.61	21	HC-1	4.14	30 (tie)	0.44	21 (tie)
PacTel	ATLANTA - NWL	4.77	24 (tie)	NC	5.75	10	0.90	1
2 WL	DETROIT - NWL	2.56	44	HC-2	4.50	24	0.05	51
2 NWL	LOS ANGELES - WL	-2.21	54	NC	7.43	1	0.40	23
	SAN DIEGO - WL	-1.11	53	HC-1	3.50	43	0.25	42 (tie)
SW Bell	BALT-WASH - NWL	5.78	18	MC-1	6.86	3	0.53	15
3 WL	BOSTON - NWL	7.63	41	MC-M	3.71	41	0.33	33 (tie)
4 NWL	CHICAGO - NWL	4.30	30	HC-2	5.57	14 (tie)	0.30	39 (tie)
	DALLAS - WL	2.36	46	NC	2.57	51 (tie)	0.09	48
	KANSAS CITY - WL	1.60	48	MC-1	4.14	30 (tie)	0.24	44
	ST. LOUIS - WL	3.90	37	NC	4.14	30 (tie)	0.07	49 (tie)
US West	DENVER - WL	4.11	33	HC-M	4.00	36 (tie)	0.74	5
4 WL	MINNEAPOLIS - WL	6.47	10	HC-2	3.57	42	0.55	14
1 NWL	PHOENIX - WL	3.39	39	HC-1	4.29	26 (tie)	0.45	19 (tie)
	SAN DIEGO - NWL	6.56	8	HC-2	1.20	56	0.71	6
	SEATTLE - WL	2.73	42	MC-M	4.14	30 (tie)	0.68	7

INDEPENDENTS

Bay Area (2)	SAN FRAN-S'JOSE NWL	-3.09	56	NC	1.80	55	0.44	21 (tie)
Buffalo Tel	BUFFALO - NWL	1.29	50 (tie)	MC-M	5.57	14 (tie)	0.25	42 (tie)
Cell. Comm.	CINCINNATI - NWL	1.29	50 (tie)	NC	3.80	40	0.07	49 (tie)
Cell. Comm.	CLEVELAND - NWL	3.93	35	LC-M	3.00	46 (tie)	0.34	31 (tie)
Cybertel	ST. LOUIS - NWL	5.60	22	NC	5.86	6 (tie)	0.21	45
Houston Cell.	HOUSTON - NWL	4.48	28	HC-1	3.00	46 (tie)	0.17	46
Ind'polis Cell.	INDIANAPOLIS - NWL	9.23	2	HC-M	5.71	11 (tie)	0.31	37 (tie)
LA Cellular	LOS ANGELES - NWL	4.77	24 (tie)	NC	7.00	2	0.32	35 (tie)
Metro Mobile	PHOENIX - NWL	6.29	15	HC-2	3.20	45	0.89	2
Metro One	NEW YORK - NWL	3.92	36	HC-2	3.00	46 (tie)	0.63	10
Metrocell	DALLAS - NWL	6.88	7	NC	4.80	21 (tie)	0.51	16
Metrophone	PHILADELPHIA - NWL	3.32	40	NC	4.80	21 (tie)	0.50	17
Mil'kee Cell.	MILWAUKEE - NWL	4.52	27	HC-2	4.14	30 (tie)	0.00	52 (tie)
Radiofone	NEW ORLEANS - NWL	4.18	32	LC-2	2.33	53	0.38	25 (tie)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 3. Summary of Evaluations by Parent Corporation

Firm	PPI Quartile	#Plans Quartile	FFI Quartile	Price Diff. Ratings
Ameritech	Most 1-2	1-2	2-3	High priced
Bell Atlantic	3-4	Vary	Always 1	Most NC
BellSouth	1-2	3-4	3-4	Vary
GTE	Most 1-2	Most 3-4	1-3	Most mixed
McCaw Cellular	Vary	Most 1-2	Varies	Most mixed
NYNEX	2-3	Vary	2-3	Mixed
PacTel	Most 4	Most 1-2	Varies	Vary
Southwest. Bell	Most 3-4	Vary	Most 3-4	Vary
US West	1 or 3	Most 3-4	Most 1-2	Mixed
Independents (inc. Cellular Comm.)	Vary	Majority 3-4	Majority 3-4	7 NC; Others vary

Bibliography

Adams, M. W. (1990). Entry strategy in local duopoly markets: Symmetry and rivalry in the cellular telephone industry (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee). Dissertation Abstracts International, 52, 03A.

Anderson, S. P., and Engers, M. (1992). Stackelberg versus Cournot oligopoly equilibrium. International Journal of Industrial Organization, 10, 127-135.

Brenner, R. (1987). Rivalry: In Business, Science, Among Nations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Calhoun, G. (1988). Digital Cellular Radio. Norwood, Mass.: Artech House, Inc.

Davis, J. A. (1988). Cellular mobile telephone services. In B. R. Guile and J. B. Quinn (Eds.), Managing Innovation: Cases from the Services Industries, (pp. 144-164). Washington: National Academy Press.

Friedman, J. W. (1983). Oligopoly Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fullerton, H. S. (in press). Duopoly and competition: The case of American cellular telephone. Telecommunications Policy.

Fullerton, H. S. (1996). Does duopoly work? The United States cellular telephone story (Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida). Dissertation Abstracts International, 58, 07A.

Geroski, P. A., Phlips, L., and Ulph, A. (1985). Oligopoly, competition and welfare: Some recent developments. Journal of Industrial Economics, 33, 369-386.

Hardman, K. E. (1982). A primer on cellular mobile telephone systems. Federal Bar News & Journal, 29 (11), 385-391.

Hazlett, T. W. (1990). Duopolistic competition in cable television: Implications for public policy. Yale Journal on Regulation, 7 (1), 65-119.

A History of Cellular Airtime Pricing, January 1985-January 1991. (1991). Bland, MO: Information Enterprises.

Kotter, J. P., and Heskett, J. L. (1993). Corporate Culture and Performance. New York: The Free Press.

Laffont, J.-J., and Tirole, J. (1993). A Theory of Incentives in Procurement and Regulation. Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press.

Ng, Y. (1991). Should a 'natural monopolist' be subject to competition? With special reference to cellular mobile telephone services in Australia. Australian Economic Review, 2nd Quarter 1991, 32-44.

Pearce, J. A. II, and Robinson, R. B. Jr. (1985). Strategic Management: Strategy Formulation and Implementation, 2nd ed. Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.

Rasmusen, E. (1994). Games and Information: An Introduction to Game Theory, 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA and Oxford: Blackwell.

Ruiz, L. K. (1994). Pricing strategies and regulatory effects in the U.S. cellular telecommunications duopolies. Paper presented at the 22nd annual Telecommunications Policy Research Conference, Solomons Island, MD.

Shapiro, C. (1989). Theories of oligopoly behavior. In R. Schmalensee and R. D. Willig, (Eds.), Handbook of Industrial Organization, (pp. 329-414). Amsterdam and New York: North-Holland.

Smith, K. G., Grimm, C. M., and Gannon, M. J. (1992). Dynamics of Competitive Strategy. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Stoetzer, M.-W., and Tewes, D. (1996). Competition in the German cellular market? Lessons of duopoly. Telecommunications Policy, 20 (4), 303-310.

Von Neumann, J., and Morgenstern, O. (1944). Theory of Games and Economic Behavior. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Whittington, R. C. (1993). What Is Strategy - and Does It Matter? London and New York: Routledge.

Presentation Paper for ' 98 AEJMC
Media Management and Economics Division

A NEW ENTRY IN THE TELEVISION BROADCASTING INDUSTRY AND PROGRAM DIVERSITY : THE CASE OF THE EMERGENCE OF SBS-TV IN KOREA

MYUNG-HYUN KANG

1451 Spartan VLG Apt. L
E-Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 355-1267
kangmyu1@pilot.msu.edu

Ph.D. Student
Mass Media Ph.D. Program
Michigan State University

A NEW ENTRY IN THE TELEVISION BROADCASTING INDUSTRY AND PROGRAM DIVERSITY

This paper investigated the relationship between the program format diversity and network competition caused by an addition of the new network, using Herfindahl-Hirschman Index. Based on the oligopoly theory and its relevant research, this study hypothesized that networks competition encouraged their program diversity. Consistent with the oligopoly theory, the findings of this study supported the hypothesis. More specifically, this study first showed the existing networks maintained limited program formats until they observed the new rivalry. Next, broadcasters tried more diverse formats due to network competition. Finally, the networks continued their oligopoly practices after temporal competition period.

1. Introduction and Research Question

Since the three public service networks (KBS-1, KBS-2, and MBC) had long dominated the Korean network television, a new commercial TV (SBS-TV: Seoul Broadcasting System) network came out at the end of 1991. The emergence of the fourth network may be related to the change of structure in the Korean television industry in which the three networks had enjoyed their dominance for over 30 years, thereby signaling television network competition for the first time in Korea.

The new network has attempted to position itself as an alternative to existing networking programming from the beginning, making various strategies such as producing special programs, involving popular stars, and making different programming to gain higher ratings. In particular, the network aired its main evening news at 8 p.m., which was a dramatic change because the traditional networks broadcast their main evening news at 9 p.m. for a long time. Thus, the network has received both praise and criticism from producers, public interest groups, and television critics concerning its programming, just as Fox network had in the late of 1980s.

In general, scholars have raised some questions regarding this increased media competition. The questions focused mainly on the level of competition among networks, how the networks respond in the increased competitive structure, and whether the increased competition helps or hurts the viewing public (Litman, 1979). Out of these questions, this study was designed to assess the behavior of the networks before and after the new emergence of the network in terms of the number and types of program choices available to the viewers.

The question guiding this study, therefore, may be stated as follows: Has the emergence of the SBS network affected television format diversity in Korea?

2. *Competition and Program Diversity*

It is generally recognized that program format diversity offered by the US television networks has declined over time, and this has been attributed to an economic theory known as oligopoly (Dominick&Peace, 1976; Litman, 1979; Wakshlag&Adams, 1985).

The assumption of oligopoly theory is that there are relatively few firms that collectively comprise the entire industry. Because of this fewness, according to oligopoly theory, each oligopolist is so powerful that each one's actions such as its pricing, product differentiation or research activities directly affect the market. As a result, since rivals desire to maintain their relative standing, they must react, and thus, the reaction is, in general, what is referred to as mutual interdependence. Why firms may choose cooperation over competition was well illustrated by Litman (1979). He explained that because firms want to increase their market share, they might compete vigorously in every possible area of contact (i.e., by lowering prices, maintaining high quality standard, and introducing new produce). However, after full-fledged competition which was attempted by "price cut, new advertising campaign and new product innovation," they will just watch their market shares decline (Litman, p.394). Based on this aftermath, therefore, they recognized that it is wiser to cooperate with each other in order to maximize industry profits than to engage in such unprofitable skirmishes. Finally, through mutual interdependence and cooperation using "high product prices, low input prices, and limited advertising expenditure," they may watch their profits grow (Litman, P. 394). As a result, they resemble one another again under the oligopolistic norm, and their product may be homogeneous (Picard, 1989).

Consistent with oligopoly theory, there was an evidence that the broadcast networks employed oligopolistic practices, resulting in a general decrease in program format diversity. Dominick and Pearce (1976) found that an overall decline in program diversity between 1953 and 1974 when the networks perfected their oligopolistic practices. They analyzed the program diversity of network prime-time programming during the fall season of each year into 14 categories of programming, using diversity and homogeneity indices. The diversity index refers to the extent to which a few categories dominate prime time, which was calculated by summing the percentages in the top three categories per season and subtracting from 100 (1-CR_3), whereas the homogeneity is about how much the networks resembled each other within and across these categories. The result presented that both of these indices have declined over time and that networks have copied each other's successful program types, which exhibited a mutual interdependence among program formats. Although program diversity declined during this period, if the network cartel appeared to be unstable due to a temporary competitive action, the fact that the networks offered more diverse program was also supported by their study. That is, Dominick and Pearce found some peaks in diversity such as the period from 1961 to 1963 and 1969 to 1970.

Litman (1979) confirmed that an unexpected upheaval in equilibrium, triggered by an industry leader, contributes to greater diversity. Observing the big three networks' competitive activities (i.e., by increasing spending on programming and experimenting with new format) during the late 1970s as a network rivalry, he hypothesized that such intense rivalry should stimulate greater experimentation and program diversity. Using a Herfindahl-Herschman Index to assess the program diversity during that time period, he found that the index decreased dramatically during the created network competition, indicating that viewers had greater choices at any particular point during the period. In addition, the average number of program options per time, he discovered, increased as well. In sum, his study supported the assumption that network competition prompted an increase in the networks program diversity.

Analyzing the entire time period involving the period of Dominick and Pearce's and Litman's studies, Wakshlag and Adams (1985) confirmed that there was an overall decline in program diversity over the thirty years and that the temporary increase in the late 1970s was caused by the outbreak of rivalry. They also noticed that as the networks restored their cooperative spirit during the early 1980s, network diversity decreased accordingly. More importantly they found that a sharp decline of diversity beginning 1971 was associated with the imposition of the FCC's Prime-Time Access Rules.

According to Albarron et al.'s study (1991), an introduction of a new networks as well as network rivalry also increased the network diversity. They examined how the introduction of the Fox network affected the program diversity. Based on the hypothesis that the Fox network, which was introduced in 1986, increased program diversity, the study analyzed all regularly scheduled prime time programs on the broadcast networks from 1983 to 1990. Using 21 content categories, the study compared the diversity before and after the emergence of the network through the diversity index adapted from Dominick and Pearce's study (1976). The result illustrated that the diversity index increased from 1985 to 1988, and part of the changes in the diversity index may be, the researchers believe, attributed to the Fox network.

On the other hand, although network diversity was increased by the emergence of a new network as well as by the outbreak of rivalry, the overall impact of the exogenous media competition (i.e., cable and VCR outlets) on network format diversity remains unclear (Litman et al., 1994; Lin, 1995).

According to Adams et al. (1992), despite the disquieting disequilibrium caused by new media competition, the number of new seasonal network programs remained relatively stable even in the midst of 1980s.

Litman et al. (1994) examined program diversity across a sample week of programming of 1992 involving commercial broadcast television, public television, basic cable, and premium cable programs, using 15 program categories. They noted that each individual cable network has a relatively narrow range of program offerings. However, they suggested that collectively, a modicum of overall diversity be somehow obtained by each individual network through a process of counterprogramming and product differentiation.

Lin (1995) analyzed the trends in prime-time network program diversity during the 1980s to test the hypothesis that network program diversity should have increased with new program format because the 1980s were characterized by the increasing threat of new media competition. The findings of the study suggested that, even in the competitive video marketplace of the 1980s, shifts in program diversity were rather limited. That is, according to this study, intermedia competition has not forced the networks to fundamentally increase program format diversity, unlike intense intranetwork competition which altered network conduct during the late 1970s.

In summation, although the broadcast network diversity has declined over time under the oligopolistic practices, it is clear that some intramedia competitions caused by network rivalry activity or the emergencies of new network increase its diversity.

This study, therefore, hypothesizes that an emergence of a new network in an existing network industry forced the networks to increase program diversity, experimenting with new program formats, like Litman's study in the 1970s.

To test this hypothesis, this study was designed to examine a case of the emergence of SBS-TV in Korean television industry. Actually, compared to American commercial broadcasting structure, Korean television structure differs in two dimensions. First, before the introduction of the first commercial television (SBS-TV) in 1991, only public broadcasting networks dominated network television for many years in Korea.

Second, Korean broadcasting structure had been long affected more by political forces rather than by economic forces. Despite these differences, this study addresses the question: to what extent has the earlier studies applied to the specific Korean case caused by an introduction of a new network?

3. Method

In order to answer the research question, this study compared the degree of program diversity before and after the emergence of the new channel, SBS, which was introduced in the end of 1991. Therefore, this study highlighted the program diversity between the preceding period from 1989 to 1991 (3 years) and the following period from 1992 to 1994 (3 years).

Measurement Index

In measuring program diversity, the most complex and disputatious aspects involve the selection of program categories chosen and the diversity index utilized (Litman et al, 1994). Mentioning that subjective decisions in two dimensions can distort the research findings, Litman et al. suggest that the Herfindahl-Hirschman index yields findings consistent with other relevant index such as Relative Entropy Index, and remains a robust measure (See, Kambara, 1992; Litman, 1992). Based on this suggestion, this study calculates program diversity by using the Herfindahl-Hirschman index[1]. In addition to this index, this study also employs the Diversity index modified from Dominick and

---

[1] The index is calculated by summing up the squared shares of each program category. Thus, it indicates that the smaller the index scores, the higher the program diversity.

Pearce (1976), because the index can highlight the difference of diversity between before and after the emergence of the new channel.

Program category

On the other hand, as program categories utilized, this study adopted 15 program categories to classify, which were drawn from an earlier study (Litman et al., 1994). These categories are useful in this study because they were made to analyze the cross-cultural programming, considering the difference of various program formats in the entire world.

Study data involves all regularly scheduled entire week programs (Monday-Sunday, 6 a.m.-midnight) in all Korean networks from the 1989 - 1990 to the 1994-1995 seasons. Listings of programs were obtained from Korean Broadcasting Commission (KBC), in which all programming of the Korean television networks were supervised.

In this study, the individual program was coded as the unit of analysis and thus the total number of coded programs was 3212.

All program entries were carefully coded by two graduate students who were familiar with Korean broadcasting programs. Two coders underwent two training sessions, the first one for explanation for the coding system and categories and a second one to reinforce the category definition and work through any problem categories or definitions.

The followings are the categories involved in this study.[3]

Table 1

TV Narrative
Cinematic Narrative
Theatrical Narrative
Documentary
News/ Current Affairs
Educational/ Instructional
Hobby/Personal Interest
Variety/ Show
Game
Sports
Art/Music
Children
Religion
Minority
Others

Intercoder reliability

Intercoder reliability was determined by applying Holsti's formula to a sample of 1 year's programs (1989). The result yields average intercoder reliability across all categories of .89 for the program category classification.

4. Results

Trends of program formats

Table 2 presents the trends of program formats from 1989-1994. Examining the analyzed time periods, the overall programs on the Korean networks were dominated by three categories; "News/Current Affairs"(26.4%), "Hobby/Personal Interest"(16.2%) and "Children"(11.3%). These categories accounted for 53.9% of all network programs during this time period.

Table 2. A trend (by %) of program categories in Korean networks (Fall seasons)

Categories	***89-90***	***90-91***	***91-92***	***92-93***	***93-94***	***94-95***	***Total***
TV Narrative	9.37 (46)	10.33 (50)	8.89 (44)	*11.33 (69)*	*13.08 (73)*	*11.48 (66)*	10.75
Cinematic Nar.	3.26 (16)	3.51 (17)	2.43 (12)	*2.30 (14)*	*2.51 (14)*	*2.78 (16)*	2.80
Theatrical Nar.	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Documentary	3.87 (19)	5.79 (28)	5.46 (27)	*5.75 (35)*	*6.45 (36)*	*6.96 (40)*	5.71
News/Curren.	25.46(125)	26.45(128)	27.88(138)	*25.45(155)*	*26.88(150)*	*26.26(151)*	26.40
Educational	4.89 (24)	2.48 (12)	4.85 (24)	*5.09 (31)*	*4.12 (23)*	*1.74 (10)*	3.86
Hobby/P.Inter.	19.14 (94)	20.45 (99)	19.19 (95)	*14.45 (88)*	*11.29 (63)*	*12.70 (73)*	16.20
Variety/ Show	7.54 (37)	9.92 (48)	7.88 (39)	*7.22 (44)*	*7.35 (41)*	*6.61 (38)*	7.75
Game	1.43 (7)	1.03 (5)	1.01 (5)	*3.78 (23)*	*5.73 (32)*	*3.83 (22)*	2.80
Sports	4.48 (22)	5.58 (27)	5.45 (27)	*5.42 (33)*	*5.20 (29)*	*6.26 (36)*	5.40
Arts/Music	3.87 (19)	1.24 (6)	2.83 (14)	*2.79 (17)*	*2.51 (14)*	*2.26 (13)*	2.58
Children	12.63(62)	9.92 (48)	9.49 (47)	*10.18 (62)*	*11.47 (64)*	*14.09 (81)*	11.30
Religion	0.20 (1)	0.21 (1)	0.20 (1)	*0.16 (1)*	-	-	0.19
Minority	1.43 (7)	0.41 (2)	0.40 (2)	*0.49 (3)*	*0.90 (5)*	*0.70 (4)*	0.72
Others	2.44 (12)	2.69 (13)	4.04 (20)	*5.58 (34)*	*2.51 (14)*	*4.35 (25)*	3.60
Total	100 (491)	100 (484)	100 (495)	*100 (609)*	*100 (558)*	*100 (575)*	100.0

* ( ): The number of programs

However, this trend had changed over time, especially before and after the year 1992 when a new network was introduced. While the percentage of the dominant program genres declined, the percentage of other genres has increased after the 1992-1993 season. For instance, "News/Current Affairs" and "Hobby/Personal Interest", which represented 26.60% and 19.59% in the 1989-1991 period, dropped to 26.20% and

12.81% respectively in the 1992-1994 period. In contrast, the percentage of "TV Narrative", "Documentary" and "Game" genres rose from 9.53% to 11.96%, 5.04% to 6.39% and 1.56% to 4.45% in the same period. "Children" genre, however, represented increasing trend over the time period analyzed from 10.68% to 11.91%.

Some parts of these changes may be attributed to the introduction of a new network, SBS-TV. As the new network introduced and reinforced various formats such as "Documentary" genre (i.e., "unsolved mystery" and "Special documentary") and "Sports" genre (i.e., "NBA Basketball," "Wednesday Bowling," "Thursday Boxing" and "Friday Golf"), the network tried to introduce more various programs available to the audience. In particular, the network attempted lots of "Variety/Show" genres such as the program "Naughty fellow's parade," targeting its programs toward the young audience.

In addition to these various formats, SBS-TV scheduled its programs differently from existing network programming, scheduling its main evening news at 8 p.m. and miniseries adjacently. These strategies forced other networks to try to produce more diverse formats. For example, the percentage of "documentary" genre in the KBS-1 network began to increase from 6.5% in the 91-92 season to 12.5 % in the 92-93 season. Also, that of "TV narrative genre" in the KBS-2 and MBC rose from 9.94%, 12.3% to 18.2% and 13.1% respectively between the same period.

Comparison of the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index between, before, and after the emergence of the new network

To test this study's hypothesis, predicting clear difference in program diversity between, before, and after the introduction of the new network, the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index was calculated.

As Table 3 indicates, the overall mean for the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index for the time period analyzed, is . 1402. In regard to previous research (Litman et al., 1994 and Lin, 1995), the index indicates a moderate degree of concentration across all program categories. That is, the degree of this diversity is relatively higher than that of Litman et al.'s, in which the mean of the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index for the US' four networks is .20. However, it is similar to the Lin's study, in which the mean of the index is .131.

The most significant finding illustrated by the data is that there is a clear change of this index between the year 1991 and 1992 when the new network was introduced.

As Table 3 illustrated, the yearly Herfindahl-Hirschman Index is over the total mean (.1402) before the year 1992, which indicates relatively lower levels of diversity occurring in this period. In contrast, the index dropped to .1287 in 1992 dramatically, supporting the hypothesis that more diverse program formats will be offered by the emergence of the new network.

Table 3. A trends of H-H Index from the 1989 to the 1994

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Herfindahl-Hirschman Index	.1413	.1514	.1491	**.1287**	**.1344**	**.1362**	.1402

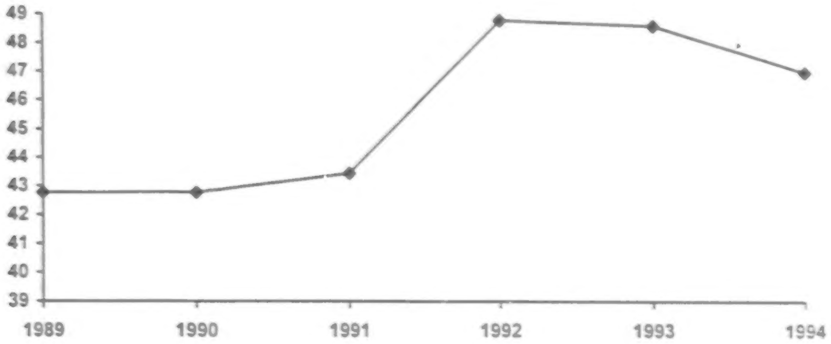
While the index continued to increase a little since the sharp drop, the data reveal that each index is respectively lower after the year 1992 rather than before the year. Thus, consistent with the findings of previous researches such as Litman's (1979) and Albarron et al. (1991), this finding supported this study's hypothesis that the introduction of the new networks affected the type of program categories available to the audience.

Comparison of Diversity Index between, before, and after the emergence of new network

To test the hypothesis about the change of diversity since the addition of new networks, this study also tried to measure Diversity Index which was introduced by Dominick and Pearch's study (1976).

The result of the Diversity Index is charted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Diversity Index trends from 1989 to 1994



As Figure 1 shows, the diversity index presented a low point during the period from the 1989 to 1991 seasons, ranging between 42.77 - 43.44. However, the diversity index rose to 48.77 in 1992 season. This is another finding to support the hypothesis that more diverse formats is associated with network competition caused by the emergence of the new network.

The index began to decline since the year 1992 to 48.57 and 46.95 respectively, which implies that the networks continued their oligopoly practices again by developing similar programming to each other.

5. Discussions and Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the program format diversity and increased network competition caused by an addition of the new network in an existing market industry. Based on the oligopoly theory and its relevant research, this study assessed the Korean networks' program diversity during the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s, hypothesizing that networks competition encourages their program diversity. Consistent with past works (Litman, 1979; Albarron et al., 1991), the findings of this study supported the hypothesis. That is, despite different broadcasting industry like Korea, the essential logic of oligopolistic structure can be explained in the Korean broadcasting market, and thus the oligopolistic practices by the networks also proliferate as found in this study.

First, the traditional networks maintained limited program formats until they observed the new rivalry. For example, just two or three program formats such as "News/Current Affairs," "Hobby/Personal Interest" and "Children" were dominated on existing Korean networks without changes. "Documentary" and "TV Narrative" has often emerged as the dominant program genre with increased networks competition.

Second, although broadcasters tried more diverse formats due to networks competition, the formats were mostly cheaper formats such as "Sports" (usually imported) or "Documentary" (usually imported), except some documentaries such as "unsolved mystery" which was produced by high-cost. In this study, program diversity was highly increased through the genres such as "documentary," "sports" and "game" associated with much lower cost rather than TV drama genre (See, the Thomas & Litman's study (1991)).

Finally, the networks continued their oligopoly practices after temporal program experimentation. In this study, the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index has been slowly increased again since the shakeup of 1992. This result may also explain a correlation between increasing profits and decreasing diversity, because program experimentation typically increases program input costs and carries a potentially high degree of economic risk (Adams et al., 1992). Thus, this study illustrates how the broadcasters try to continue oligopoly practices by imitating their programming of each other.

Despite these findings, it is necessary to include more various dimensions for future research to see the relationship between media competitive structure or activity and its performance. For example, if possible, the quality aspects of the individual program itself should be considered in this research area, using AI (Appreciation Index) and VI (violence index), which both are the kinds of program quality index. Furthermore, as some scholars notes (For a review, See Litman, 1992; Napoli, 1997), the demand-side dimension of the program diversity should also be considered not to neglect the diversity of audience consumption. That is because the arguments for program diversity only in the supply side would be meaningless with neglecting diverse program consumption of audience.

---

[i] The definition for each category is as follows.

· TV Narrative : TV narrative involves the dramatic presentation which were created specially for television.

· Cinematic Narrative : Unlike the TV Narrative, it referred to the dramatic presentation designated for cinema.

· Theatrical Narrative : It contains the movie for the theatrical stage.

· Documentary : This category encompasses all documentary formatted programs.

· News/ Current Affairs : This category encompasses daily newscasts as well as discussion and interview programs dealing with news and public affairs.

· Educational/ Instructional : This category includes just formal and academic instructional programs.

· Hobby/Personal Interest : This category encompasses the informal programs such as fitness, cooking, other personal instruction techniques as well as other information or talk show dealing with general interest topic.

· Variety/ Show : This category contains light entertainment performances, different musical and entertainment acts and stand-up comedy performances as well.

· Game : This category contains all the programs that were created for entertainment and appeared in the game format involving quiz shows and game shows.

· Sports : This category involves all sporting events, live or taped, including commentary, interview, or previews of upcoming events.

· Art/Music : This category involves live or taped fine arts performances such as music, dance or concerts.

· Children : This category involves all programs that are specially produced and targeted to children below the age of 13. This category can span all program content areas such television and cinematic narrative and cartoon drama.

- Religion : This category contains any program which is related to religion, including religious services and instruction.
- Minority : This category contains all program, regardless of content, that are specially produced and targeted to ethnic minorities and above the age of 60.
- Others : This category includes the residual for programming that doesn't fit any of the preceding categories such as home shopping and campaign program.

BiBLIOGRAPHY

Alan B. Albarron, et. al., "Trends in Network Prime-Time Programming, 1983-1990:The Emergence of the Fox Network," Feedback, Fall 1991, pp.2-5.

John C. Busterna, "Welfare Economics and Media Performance," Journal of Media Economics, Spring 1988, pp.75-88.

Joseph R. Dominick and Millard C. Pearce, "Trends in Network Prime Time Programming, 1953-74," Journal of Communication, Winter 1976, pp.70-80.

Adams, W. J., Eastman, S.T., & Lewine, R.F. "Prime-time network television programming," in S.T. Eastman(Ed.), Broadcast/cable programming, 1992, Belmont, CA:Wadsworth, pp. 115-159.

Peter Hillve and Karl Erik Rosengren, "Swedish Public Service Television: Quality for Sale?" Studies of Broadcasting, February 1992, pp.87-111.

Sakae Ishikawa, et. al., "Diversity in Television Programming: Comparative Analysis of Five Countries," Studies of Broadcasting, February 1994, pp.155-170.

Naoyuki Kambara, "Study of the Diversity Indices Used for Programming Analysis," Studies of Broadcasting, February 1992, pp.195-205.

Carolyn A. Lin, "Diversity of Network Prime - Time Program Formats During the 1980s," The Journal of Media Economics, 1995, Vol. 8, pp.17-28.

Barry R. Litman, "The Television Networks, Competition, and Program Diversity," Journal of Broadcasting, Fall 1979, pp.393-409.

Barry R. Litman, "Economic Aspects of Program Quality: The Case for Diversity," Studies of Broadcasting, February 1992, pp.121-156.

Barry R. Litman, et.al., "Measuring Diversity in U.S. Television Programming," Studies of Broadcasting, February 1994, pp.131-153.

Philip M. Napoli, "Rethinking Program Diversity Assessment :An Audience-Centered Approach," The Journal of Media Economics, 1997, Vol. 10, pp.59-74.

Yasushi Nishino, "Diversity in TV Programming in Japan," Studies of Broadcasting, February 1994, pp.115-153.

T. Mark Phillips, Thomas A. Griffiths, and Norman C. Tarbox, "Public Television Efficiency Versus Diversity," Journal of Media Economics, Spring 1991, pp.19-33.

Laurie Thomas and Barry R. Litman, "Fox Broadcasting Company, Why Now?," Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, Spring 1991, pp.139-157.

Jacob Wakshlag and William Adams, "Trends in Program Variety and the Prime Time Access Rule," Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, Winter 1985, pp.23-34.

Family Pictures:

Constructing the Typical American in 1920s Magazines

Carolyn Kitch

Assistant Professor

Northwestern University

The Medill School of Journalism
1845 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60208-2101

Work phone: 847-491-2085
Work fax: 847-491-5907
Home phone: 847-491-6272
Email: c-kitch@nwu.edu

A research-paper submission to the Magazine Division,
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication,
for the 1998 Annual Conference, Baltimore, Maryland

Family Pictures:

Constructing the Typical American in 1920s Magazines

ABSTRACT (150 words)

The 1920s is often remembered as the "jazz age," a time of flappers and speakeasies--yet many media of the day portrayed American life in a very different way. Popular magazines, which reached millions of readers every month, described a modern but wholesome lifestyle based on a shared American identity and defined in terms of the nuclear family. Their audience was not urban sophisticates, but a socially and economically ambitious, suburban middle class--the group that would be key to the success of mass culture in twentieth-century America. This rhetorical analysis considers how two of the era's top-circulation magazines, *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Good Housekeeping*, used both verbal and visual imagery (especially the cover art of Norman Rockwell and Jessie Willcox Smith) to create a blueprint for a distinctly commercial version of family life.

Family Pictures:

Constructing the Typical American in 1920s Magazines

The decade of the 1920s has been preserved in the American collective memory as a time of reckless freedom and disillusionment, an era when a "lost generation" of youth searched for escape through jazz, liquor, and sexual freedom. Some mass media of the era reinforced this characterization, supplying images of flappers and vamps, of college frat boys in coonskin coats, of fast-talking, gin-swilling, world-weary socialites suspended in an endless weekend.[1] Yet other media, especially mass-circulation magazines, painted a very different picture of the 1920s, describing a new kind of domesticity based on a shared, "typical" American identity and defined in terms of the suburban nuclear family.

Historian Ruth Schwartz Cowan argues that the "feminine mystique," considered to have emerged in the 1950s, actually dates back to the twenties; this paper echoes that assertion and further contends that this earlier mystique, which included fathers and children as well as mothers, was constructed in America's most influential mass medium of the day, mass-circulation magazines. Focusing on two of the best-read periodicals of the era, *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Good Housekeeping*, this rhetorical analysis considers primarily cover imagery but also editorial matter and advertising content--from which emerged a new domestic ideal that would shape popular-culture imagery for the rest of the century.

The Scholarly and Theoretical Context for this Study

This study adds to a growing body of cultural history on the role of popular magazines in the emergence of twentieth-century commercial culture. This was the era when media first became "mass" in a truly national sense; it was also pivotal era in social history, as a new middle income group became the culturally dominant class in America and as women's social and political opportunities widened. Richard Ohmann and Matthew Schneirov have considered how changes in America's class structure shaped, and were shaped by, popular magazines; Jennifer Scanlon, Ellen Gruber Garvey, and Helen Damon-Moore have analyzed the gendering of consumer culture, including magazines, in the new century.[2] This study draws on such scholarship while adding a new dimension: an assessment of the role of visual imagery in magazines' articulation of gender and class.

Several studies have examined *either* the editorial content *or* the artwork of *The Saturday Evening Post* during this era, including Jan Cohn's excellent book on its editor, George Horace Lorimer,[3] as well as works on the early years of the career of artist Norman Rockwell.[4] Since there are no major works of scholarship on *Good Housekeeping* (aside from three books on the cover artist studied here, Jessie Willcox Smith[5]), this paper argues for the inclusion of that magazine in studies of the cultural impact of early-twentieth-century mass media.

Several of the scholars mentioned above, particularly Richard Ohmann, view early-twentieth-century mass-circulation magazines as a powerful political as well as social force, and this paper concurs. It further supports Jennifer Scanlon's argument that magazines of this era gave birth to the idea of a "typical" American. Scanlon's analysis of gender examines how magazine articles and fiction of this era constructed an average American woman. In its focus on the American family, this paper considers gender *roles* within the family but argues that the "typical family" was defined primarily in terms of class--in terms of what editors and artists imagined to be the center of the U. S. population's changing demographics in a time of significant population growth and upward economic mobility.

During the early twentieth century, mass-circulation magazines existed in a symbiotic relationship with the new national advertising industry, which financially supported magazines in return for access to swelling audiences of consumers. Central to the success of this commercial formula was the middle class, whose social and economic choices would determine how business would be done in the modern era.[6] The middle class was thus key to the hegemony of the producers of mass goods and mass culture.

In this paper, the concept of hegemony--first articulated by Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci--is used not as a synonym for dominance, but rather as a way of describing the fragile alliances that exist at any moment between leaders and followers, or, in a commercial power structure, between producers and consumers. Gramsci refined Marxist theory by contending that the consent of a populace is not enforced by some monolithic power; rather, the widespread acceptance of certain ideas and conditions seems to be a choice freely made by the majority of people in a society.[7]

In such a system, the most influential group of "followers" or "consumers" are quite powerful, since their consent is most necessary for the power structure to continue. Therefore, as a commercial culture emerged in early-twentieth-century America, it was in the best interests of magazine editors to help shape the attitudes and behavior of the middle class--by offering examples, in text and pictures, of what a middle-class American should be. Magazine art of the era "provided the public with its first image of American ideals . . . . prototypes after which they could pattern themselves";[8] at the same time, the idea of an "ordinary" American entered the language of magazine editorial (*Post* editor George Horace Lorimer even claimed that "the prime qualification of being an editor is being an ordinary man"[9]).

This paper argues that, beginning in the years just after World War I, magazines constructed that ordinary American in terms of the typical family, the social and economic unit in American society for the rest of the century. To make this case, it closely examines the verbal and visual rhetoric through which editors and artists helped shaped middle-class identity and manufacture "consent" to ideas about gender, class, and consumer identity that would best serve a commercial culture. This study offers not a quantitative content analysis, but rather what journalism historian Marion Marzolf called a "content assessment," looking not just at the images but also beyond them into their cultural context--a process of "reading, sifting, weighing, comparing and analyzing the evidence in order to tell the story."[10]

Marriage and Family in the 1920s

The particular brand of domesticity envisioned by magazine editors, writers, and artists in the 1920s after World War I included all members of the nuclear family--not just mothers, but also fathers and children. All three of these roles had undergone significant debate and, to some extent, change since the Victorian era.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the notion of a "New Woman" was hotly and widely discussed in American media. A cultural construct that had emerged in the 1890s, the New Woman represented real changes in women's social, educational, economic, and political opportunities, including the movement of an increasing number of women into higher education and the professions[11] and culminating in the achievement of suffrage with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. Nevertheless, women's life patterns remained relatively consistent. Between 1890 and 1920, the marriage rate rose steadily, and until the Depression, fewer than 10 percent of U. S. wives were in the work force.[12]

One thing that *had* changed was the set of expectations Americans brought to the institution of marriage. The popularization of the works of Freud during the 1910s had validated women's sexuality, and the "new psychology" suggested that spouses should be emotionally as well as sexually compatible. Marriage became, for the first time, the primary relationship in both women's and men's lives. The new companionate model for marriage coincided with an increasing interest of middle-class men in home life. The "domestic man" spent time with his children and "made his wife, rather than his male associates, his regular companion on evenings out."[13]

This vision of a new kind of American family in the twentieth century was played out in a new type of living space: the suburb. The factors of corporatization (providing stable incomes for white-collar men), swelling urban populations, and advances in transportation combined to enable families to leave cities and move to new housing developments in outlying areas. Historian Margaret Marsh argues that early suburbs were created as part of a middle-class vision of "masculine domesticity [and] marital togetherness," but that their greater effect was the isolation of residents into families "centered around the demands of childrearing."[14]

Indeed, magazines and other prescriptive literature of the day suggested that no marriage could be truly happy if it did not produce children. Thanks to the increasing availability of birth control, parents had fewer worries about overwhelmingly large families, so the children they did bear took on new status in the middle-class household. Children were treasured and coveted, "becoming almost a commodity, a kind of consumer good that symbolized family completion and marital success." Infertile couples sought medical help or adoption. Experts warned fertile women that refusal to bear children would prevent them from experiencing "complete sexual satisfaction" or would lead to divorce.[15]

Membership in the National Congress of Mothers, a network of "Mother's Clubs," more than tripled between 1915 and 1920, and in 1924, this grass-roots organization evolved into the Parent-Teacher Association.[16] Much of the new campaign for "educated motherhood,"[17] however, originated in professions such as psychology, medicine, and media. These experts instructed women to make motherhood their first priority and yet to be careful not to smother their children with too much attention.[18] Such mixed messages produced uncertainty that, itself, became a problem to be solved by experts. Promotional material for the new *Parents* magazine, launched in 1926, explained: "Many of us cringe at the revelation of our inadequacies . . . . educators, psychiatrists, writers and social workers are turning their searchlights on Parents . . . [who] realize that instinct and tradition are not sufficient equipment for their highly important job."[19]

It is little wonder, then, that the covers of mass-circulation magazines of the late 1910s and the 1920s depicted women and men as mothers and fathers, and increasingly showcased children themselves. The turn to domesticity was foreshadowed in a mid-1910s paradigm shift that occurred on the covers of both *Good Housekeeping* and *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Through the end of 1915, the former magazine had regularly featured the cover drawings of Coles Phillips, an illustrator known for his sleekly-modern "fadeaway girls," slim, young, sophisticated-looking women (whose dress patterns blended with the color or design of the background), while the *Post* had been a regular display case for J. C. Leyendecker's elegant couples, haughtily beautiful women and debonair men. But at the start of 1916, both magazines began long-term relationships with very different illustrators who specialized in homey scenes of family life: Jessie Willcox Smith and Norman Rockwell. The editorial material and advertisements inside these periodicals underscored the cover artists' visions.

Maternity and Childhood in *Good Housekeeping*

By the time she became *Good Housekeeping*'s primary cover artist (a position she would hold for 17 years), Jessie Willcox Smith was already nationally known as an illustrator of mother-and-child scenes and, particularly, of child life. Smith's advertising work for Ivory Soap in the 1890s had led to assignments from *Scribner's*, *Collier's*, and *Century*, as well as covers for *The Ladies' Home Journal*, *McClure's*, and *Collier's*, and *Woman's Home Companion* featuring children.[20]

Smith herself never had children, and by the time she began her work for *Good Housekeeping*, she was well past childbearing age. Nor had she ever married, rejecting, in her personal life,[21] the heterosexual ideal of the modern era. Yet she echoed the rhetoric of "maternalist" Progressive-era reformers, calling marriage and motherhood "the ideal life for a woman."[22]

More so than some of its competitors (especially the conservative *Ladies' Home Journal*), *Good Housekeeping* cautiously embraced the women's rights movement. Though it stopped short of supporting the drive for suffrage, it published pro-suffrage opinions,[23] and after women gained the vote, the magazine encouraged its readers' informed participation in the electoral process.[24] It ran a regular report from Washington by Francis Parkinson Keyes, a popular novelist and the wife of a Senator, who wrote not just about the social life of the nation's capital, but also political isues of the day. In 1923, Mrs. Keyes covered the International Women's Suffrage Alliance meeting in Rome for the magazine.[25]

Still, *Good Housekeeping*'s editorial pages centered on home care and motherhood. Beginning in the mid-1910s, the magazine published a monthly parenting-advice feature called "Mothers and Children" by Mrs. Louise Hogan. These were not sentimental or emotional articles, but directly instructional features. In May of 1916, Mrs. Hogan's "Mother's Day" column--referring to the holiday declared by Congress just two years earlier--advised mothers on how to avoid mental and physical exhaustion, not for their own sake, but for the sake of their children. Another such article (illustrated by Smith) provided five pages of detailed advice from physicians on what children should eat so that they would not grow up to be "delicate or neurotic."[26]

Advertisements in the magazine similarly described mothers' duties as something akin to science, requiring a set of specialized skills that were inextricably linked with the use of new products made for family life. An ad in a 1916 issue explained that a child's health was "a question of food, hygiene and exercise. The food problem is easily solved with Shredded Wheat."[27]

By the mid-1920s, motherhood was being championed in the pages of the magazine by none other than Mrs. Charles Dana Gibson, wife of the well-known illustrator who had created some of the first visual representations of "the New Woman" during the 1890s. Mrs. Gibson, then heading a foster-child-placement agency, urged readers to adopt if they were unable to have children. She told the story of "a cultured, well-to-do woman--the kind of woman about whom one says, 'She has everything in the world' " but who in fact "was bored and lonely and purposeless." Her husband, "a busy executive," did not want a child, but to please his wife, he consented to adopt a daughter. The little girl charmed him and made them a complete family. "She's just what we have wanted for years, and we didn't know it," he exclaimed, speaking of his daughter as if she were a well-chosen purchase.[28]

After January 1916, such beloved children, drawn by Jessie Willcox Smith, romped regularly on the covers of *Good Housekeeping*, and by the 1920s, they were seen by a million Americans every month. This decade was a turning point for the magazine: its circulation, which had been only about 300,000 in the early teens, would reach two million in the 1930s.[29] The nearly 200 covers Smith drew for the magazine between 1917 and 1933 were a large part of the publication's editorial identity and success. *Good Housekeeping* further marketed reproductions of her drawings on items such as postcards and china. Through these "collectibles"--such as her Madonna-and-Child pate series, offered to readers by mail-order (Figure 1)--the magazine's covers and their idyllic domestic imagery were preserved and displayed in American homes.

The presence of children in almost all of Smith's cover illustrations was a clear sign that the woman accompanying them was (by virtue of having borne a child) a woman, not the carefree "flapper" girl of the jazz age. Smith's women were serious, rarely smiling, yet calm, self-assured, and serene. They were usually shown in the act of mothering, bending down or leaning over to comfort or help their children, rather than looking directly outward at the viewer. Three examples of such women are those shown in Figure 2 (reading to a daughter), Figure 3 (caressing an infant), and Figure 4 (gathering apples in an apron from a son).

The women's own appearances contained clues about their era. All three illustrations offered a modern version of maternity. No longer a Victorian matron, the twentieth-century American mother was slim and pretty, a youthful woman who no doubt followed the advice of a 1927 Palmolive Soap ad in the magazine, which urged readers of the need to "Keep That Schoolgirl Complexion" long "after school days."[30] She was fashionable as well. The book-reading mother's loose, flowing, dress and pointed shoes were popular styles of 1920s; the apple-gathering mother's modernity was given away by her knee-length, pleated skirt, her careless display of leg, and her bobbed hair.

This was not only the modern woman, but the new suburban mother, as suggested by the outdoor backdrops. As telling as her setting was each woman's body position, which directed the readers' eyes toward the child. On the magazine cover of the 1920s, "motherhood" was more about the child than the mother. In fact, most of Smith's covers were of children only, shown usually in the world of nature, such as the young siblings apple-gathering in Figure 5 and ice skating in Figure 6.

Smith's children could be overly-idealized, but many were shown in activities, poses, and expressions that were universal. They seemed perplexed, curious, or surprised, as if the artist had caught them in some secret act. One *Good Housekeeping* reader wrote to the editors that Smith's cover subjects "really look[ed] like children."[31] The fact that Smith drew primarily toddlers increased her subjects' typicality: they were sweet cherubs rather than little people with individuality. A Smith cover child could be any reader's child.

Her drawings were "so representative of the American youngster that the publication received numerous letters from concerned mothers in all parts of the country" who thought that Smith had somehow drawn their children, notes biographer S. Michael Schnessel.[32] Smith saved one of these, sent in 1926 by a mother in Beverly, Mass., who wrote: "I was very much thrilled on seeing the November cover of *Good Housekeeping*, to find that my two darling children were portrayed thereon . . . . Little Freddie's every characteristic line and pose is so perfect, and Pamela's timid and wistful expression . . . . Where and when did you see the children?"[33] "Freddie" and "Pamela"[34] are shown in Figure 7.

Smith's favorite cover subject was Everychild, like the tow-headed boy in Figure 8 building his future with ABCs. Boys in particular would become the symbol of America's future in the editorial pages and the cover art of *The Saturday Evening Post*.

The New Domestic Ideal in "America's Family Magazine"

Though Norman Rockwell is now best remembered for his *Saturday Evening Post* covers of the mid-twentieth-century, his affiliation with the magazine and his signature family scenes date back to the mid-teens. Like Smith, Rockwell--already a contributor to *Boys' Life* and the *Youth's Companion*[35]--preferred drawing children, who were the subjects of 90 percent of his *Post* covers between 1916 and 1919 and half of all his covers for that magazine during the 1920s.[36] Though older than Smith's typical cover subject, Rockwell's child was also a vision of the American Everychild.

Most of his covers were anecdotes rather than merely images. Rockwell scholar Christopher Finch notes that the artist'ss characters--"the protagonists of his little dramas" which centered on "the small crises of everyday life"--were "familiar icons." Moreover, "all the images seem[ed] somehow connected. They belong[ed] to the same world."[37]

Yet the world in which Rockwell's stories unfolded only *seemed* familiar; in post-war America, Rockwell's world was in fact a utopian construction, what the artist himself described as "life as I would like it to be."[38] Rockwell's hopes coincided with those of *Saturday Evening Post* editor George Horace Lorimer, who made content suggestions for many of Rockwell's covers.[39]

Lorimer imagined his primary readers as "the ambitious young men of the great middle-class American public" and his broader audience as "the whole of American mainstream society."[40] His editorials praised Americans who still believed in the age-old creed of individualism, who honored "the desire of every man to be the architect of his own fortunes." He assured his readers that "there is still room at the top, or pretty near the top, for literally millions of men and women who possess the requisite industry, good judgment, frugality, knowledge of human nature, persistence, intelligence and integrity." Such a person would inevitably succeed, "no matter how humble his beginning."[41]

The idea of the reader as "ambitious" and "rising" was central to the *Post*'s editorial identity in this era, and upward mobility was frequently discussed in terms of family life. A 1923 ad showed two little girls and proclaimed, in large type, "In 10 Years, Mother, One of these children will be enjoying social advantages which the other can never hope to attain." The ad copy, which promoted a series of phonograph records, played directly to middle-class class anxieties and ambitions: "home musical training is all-important, inviting that subtle advantage of personality which enables some persons to advance so much further, in the keen struggle of life . . . . [to] take their places, without embarrassment, among people of broad culture."[42]

In editorials, in ads, and in the Horatio-Alger-like profiles that were a common article format in the *Post*, the magazine attempted, notes Jan Cohn, to engender "a sense of nationalism strong enough to override America's regional differences"[43]--a seemingly classless society united by a "typical" family ideal. In keeping with this mission, writes *Post* historian Starkey Flythe, Jr., Rockwell's cover scenes "made America home, a comfortable sort of place where Main Street and Fifth Avenue exist in an easy truce and the great and the small have equal-sized emotions, pleasures and pains."[44]

The America that Rockwell and Lorimer imagined in the *Post* of the 1920s reached an enormous audience, more than two million at the decade's start and nearly three million at its end. As its circulation rose, so did the number of national advertisers who promoted their products and services in the *Post*, and by 1926, the magazine's annual advertising revenue passed $50 million.[45] Each of the *Post*'s weekly issues, which cost only five cents, ran over 200 pages and included political commentary, comedy features, inspirational and romantic fiction, and instructional articles--a mix with something for every member of the family.[46] And every member of the family appeared, at one time or another, on Rockwell's covers.

Rockwell drew adult women quite differently than had his main precedessors in magazine illustration, artists such as Charles Dana Gibson, Harrison Fisher, and Howard Chandler Christy who specialized in the "American Beauty" cover girl.[47] Arthur Guptill notes that "no matter how seductive [Rockwell] might try to picture women . . . they always turned out to look more like a fellow's mother or sister."[48] He also drew them as sweet (though rarely seductive) girlfriends: "I paint the kind of girls your mother would want you to marry," the artist himself noted.[49] When Rockwell drew women--many of his covers were solely boy scenes--these were indeed the roles into which most of his female characters were cast.

Yet his cover mothers also differed considerably from Smith's modern madonnas. In Rockwell's world, the figure of the mother was often something to be resisted or escaped by the child, who was usually a boy. This woman was the smothering mother experts warned about in prescriptive literature of the day. Figure 9 was a prime example, a scene in which Rockwell "enables the observer to see the boy's glee at his shearing, suggesting that his life has moved on a niche, leaving his mother behind while he enters the world of men, symbolized by the debonair barber."[50]

The American boy's search for masculinity was a common theme in Rockwell's work. The well-groomed barber did indeed embody one version of that ideal, yet Rockwell often chose a more rugged model.[51] The frowning boy in Figure 10 suffered the taunts of his athletic friends not only because of his own "debonair" appearance, but also because he was saddled with the unwanted femininity of a lace-capped baby sister. ("The best part of the gag was the baby's bottle in the boy's pocket," Rockwell later recalled. "I received lots of letters about his humiliation."[52]) Rockwell's art emphasized "a youthful masculinity constructed around physical prowess in preference to a fussy, family-oriented image of boyhood."[53]

In the early twentieth century, these images had as much to do with adults as they did with children. Rockwell's depiction of boyhood was only one example of a national preoccupation with masculinity--what historian John Higham called "a muscular spirit"[54]--in the larger culture. His boy athletes, like those in Figure 11, were visualizations of the "strenuous life" former President Theodore Roosevelt had recommended for young men at time when, he believed, the weakness of "the over-civilized man" endangered the future of "the race" and the strength of the nation. This strenuous life was to be lived outdoors, away from the overrefinement (and sin) of the city.[55]

Early-twentieth-century psychologists saw rugged boyhood as the solution to diminished manhood in the modern era, convinced that "it was the innate primitive savagery of young boys that could point the way to the resolution of the crisis of masculinity" and that adult males "should learn to be more like boys and less like overcivilized men," writes historian Michael Kimmel. In this view, "the savage child could be father to the man and reinstill manly behavior."[56]

Rockwell's *Post* covers of the early 1920s confirmed this desire for masculine transformation while also poking fun at it. The tackled boy in Figure 11 appeared stunned at what he had gotten himself into; in Figure 12, a dumbbell-lifting "champ" looked longingly at a poster showing him how to "be a man" ("it's easy").

Even as his boys matured and turned their attention to the opposite sex, their attempts at manly behavior had mixed results. If courtship was sexually exciting and dangerous elsewhere in popular culture of the 1920s--for instance, in the frequent movie characters of flappers, vamps, and golddiggers--in Rockwell's world, dating was a sweet and often comical rite of passage that quite naturally led to love and a happy marriage. Many of Rockwell's teenaged sweethearts were simply goofy, such as the clumsy skaters on a 1920 *Post* cover (Figure 13). In Figure 14, a couple's attempt at sexual experimentation resulted in embarrassment rather than seduction when a spying younger brother suddenly sneezed.

Yet things inevitably turned out all right for Rockwell's courting adolescents. Even though the young man at the Ouija Board in Figure 15 was helping the matter along, neither he nor his girlfriend was seriously in doubt of the outcome of his proposal. They were destined to achieve happiness as it was articulated in the pages of *Post*--through ordinary but steady effort, and through simple family life.

Rockwell's newlyweds inevitably bore children who completed the 1920s vision of suburban living. Heading this family was the "domestic man" who not only loved but befriended his wife and who (as historian Margaret Marsh describes this ideal) "took a significantly greater interest in the details of running the household and caring for the children than his father had been expected to take."[57] Though he was still Lorimer's ideal businessman, he made the most of weekends and vacations and found much of his personal identity in his family.

This man appeared not only on the *Post*'s covers, but also inside the magazine, in advertisements as well as editorial. One 1923 ad (Figure 16) showed a suited father leaning back in a rocking chair and holding a bowl of soapy water from which a young boy, seated on his knees, blew bubbles; the discarded newspaper at his feet was turned to the comic strip "Bringing Up Father." The copy proclaimed Palm Beach Suits the perfect attire for "A Summer Sunday morning when you drop your paper for a romp on the porch with the kids; during a heat-prophesying and heat-generating sermon; [or] a week-day business engagement in a stuffy office . . . ."[58]

In the new suburban domestic ideal of the 1920s, Americans were organized into family *units* that negotiated the world together and symbolized American progress through clean living. This message was underscored in Figure 17 by the vehicle in which Rockwell's family moved forward: the automobile, the era's primary symbol of progress. A similar cover published a decade later (Figure 18) showed the family as a literal unit, collapsed together in exhaustion but completion.

The vacationing father, mother, and child were merged together as one, a single image that pictured the good life in America.

Conclusion

"People like to think that Rockwell painted Middle America," notes art scholar Tom Sgouros. "The truth is, Norman Rockwell invented Middle America."[59] So did Jessie Willcox Smith with her modernized mother-and-child tableaux on the covers of *Good Housekeeping*, and so too did the writers, editors, and advertising copywriters whose vision filled the pages of magazines such as *Good Housekeeping* and the *Post* in the 1920s.

While this world was a constructed one, it was not *merely* prescriptive. The soaring circulations of both publications during this decade suggest that the idea--and ideal--of suburban family life resonated with readers, that these media "portrayed Americans as they chose to see themselves" (as one scholar characterizes Rockwell's art)[60] The magazines' turn to domesticity was rooted in broader developments that had to do with masculinity and modernity, with the evolution of women's roles and women's rights, with tensions between urban and pastoral life, and with changing ideas about marriage and childhood in the new century. Yet it was rooted as well in the social and economic importance of middle-class Americans within an increasingly commercial culture, a new power structure that revolved around the concept of an ideal lifestyle to which all readers could (and should) aspire.

Media producers have continued to describe American life in terms of a "typical" nuclear family, following the model that was set in place in mass-circulation magazines of the 1920s--three decades before the more widely-examined media celebration of mid-century suburban family life. Not in the 1950s, but in the 1920s, magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Good Housekeeping* articulated a "mystique" that would re-emerge following the Depression and World War II, and that would characterize commercial culture, and the middle-class American identity, for the rest of the twentieth century.

NOTES

1. Flappers danced across the covers of the humor periodical *Life* and amused the wits of *The New Yorker* and *The New Republic*, while writers in *The Nation* and *The Ladies' Home Journal* fretted about Americans' "new morality" and self-absorption.

2. Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London and New York: Verso, 1996); Matthew Schneirov, *The Dream of a New Social Order: Popular Magazines in America 1893-1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings:* The Ladies' Home Journal, *Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995); Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford University Press,1996); and Helen Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in* The Ladies' Home Journal *and* The Saturday Evening Post, *1880-1910* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

3. Jan Cohn, *Creating America: George Horace Lorimer and the* Saturday Evening Post (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989).

4. These works include Rockwell's autobiography, *My Adventures as an Illustrator* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988), as well as biographies and collections of his work: Laurie Norton Moffat, *Norman Rockwell: A Definitive Catalog* (Stockbridge, MA: The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge, 1986); Thomas S. Buechner, *Norman Rockwell: A Sixty Year Retrospective* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1972); Donald Walton, *A Rockwell Portrait: An Intimate Biography* (Kansas City: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1978); *Norman Rockwell and* The Saturday Evening Post *(1916-1928)* (Philadelphia: Rittenhouse Press, 1976); Robin Langley Sommer, ed., *Norman Rockwell: A Classic Treasury* (London: Bison Books, 1993); Christopher Finch, *Norman Rockwell: 322 Magazine Covers* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1979); Starkey Flythe, Jr., ed., *The* Saturday Evening Post *Norman Rockwell Book* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1986); and Arthur L. Guptill, *Norman Rockwell, Illustrator* (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1946).

5. S. Michael Schnessel, *Jessie Willcox Smith* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1977); Gene Mitchell, *The Subject Was Children: The Art of Jessie Willcox Smith* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1979); and Edward D. Nudelman, *Jessie Willcox Smith: A Bibliography* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing, 1989).

6. In this era, the ability to purchase consumer goods (including magazines) was largely limited to the middle class, but, as Richard Ohmann notes, this would change in mid-century, when the working class's own rising earning power and access to consumer credit made them "consumers," too (*Selling Culture*, 350-351).

7. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971), 80, 182.

8. Susan E. Meyer, *Norman Rockwell's People* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1981), 20.

9. George Horace Lorimer, quoted in Amy Janello and Brennon Jones, *The American Magazine* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 62.

10. Marion Marzolf, "American Studies--Ideas for Media Historians?" *Journalism History* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1978), 15.

11. Women comprised 35 percent of all college students in 1890 and nearly half in 1920; the percentage of professionals who were female rose from 35 to 44 percent between 1900 and 1920 (Nancy F. Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987], 148, 350*n*4).

12. Elaine Tyler May, *Great Expectations: Marriage and Divorce in Post-Victorian America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1980), 117, 167.

13. Margaret Marsh, *Suburban Lives* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 76.

14. Marsh, *Suburban Lives*, 129, 184.

15. Margaret Marsh and Wanda Ronner, *The Empty Cradle: Infertility in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 112-113, 120.

16. Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 44.

17. I am borrowing this term from Sheila M. Rothman, *Woman's Proper Place: A History of Changing Ideals and Practices, 1870 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 177.

18. Nancy F. Cott, Introduction, *Root of Bitterness: Documents of the Social History of American Women*, ed. Nancy F. Cott (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1972); Rothman, *Woman's Proper Place*, 211.

19. Quoted in Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, 170.

20. Smith also illustrated several well-known children's books of the day.

21. For more on Smith's background, see: Schnessel, *Jessie Willcox Smith*; Mitchell, *The Subject Was Children*; Nudelman, *Jessie Willcox Smith*; Catherine Connell Stryker, "The Studios at Cogslea," February 20-28, 1976 (Wilmington: Delaware Museum of Art, 1976); Jessie Willcox Smith, "Jessie Willcox Smith," *Good Housekeeping* (October 1917), 190-191; Patricia Likos, "The Ladies of the Red Rose," *The Feminist Art Journal* 5 (Fall 1976): 11-15, 43; and Christine Jones Huber, "The Pennsylvania Academy and Its Women, 1850 to 1920," May 3 to June 16, 1973 (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1974).

22. Stryker, "The Studios at Cogslea," 12.

23. One reason may have been the fact that Anna Kelton Wiley--wife of Dr. John Wiley, the director of the Good Housekeeping Institute--was a member of the militant Woman's Party. In February of 1918, the magazine published her views in "Why We Picketed the White House" (beginning with an italicized disclaimer that "*Good Housekeeping* does not believe in picketing the White House") (29, 124-125).

24. For instance, Elizabeth Frazer, "Say It with Ballots," *Good Housekeeping* 74 (June 1922), 27-28, 186, 189-190.

25. Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines* V (1905-1930) (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 134.

26. Mrs. Louise Hogan, "Mothers and Children,"*Good Housekeeping* (March 1916): 321-325.

27. Advertisement, *Good Housekeeping* (February 1916), 13.

28. Mrs. Charles Dana Gibson, "When a Child Adopts You," *Good Housekeeping* 85 (July 1927), 79, 133-134, 136. 139.

29. Mott, *A History of American Magazines* V, 133, 136.

30. Interestingly, the ad further warned, somewhat threateningly, "It's not only in the thirties and the forties that Youth Preservation presents itself as a problem. It starts in the late *'teens* [emphasis theirs] and the early twenties . . ." (Advertisement, *Good Housekeeping* [November 1927], n. p., in the Alice Marshall Collection, Penn State Harrisburg, Harrisburg, PA).

31. Lucy Van Haney, Brooklyn, NY, to *Good Housekeeping*, d. November 28, 1926, Jessie Willcox Smith papers, Archives of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (Philadelphia, PA).

32. Schnessel, *Jessie Willcox Smith*, 124.

33. Constance Bell Pearson, Beverly, MA, to Jessie Willcox Smith, c/o *Good Housekeeping*, d. October 28, 1926, Jessie Willcox Smith papers.

34. These children, and Smith's other cover toddlers, were in fact more likely to have been her suburban Philadelphia neighbors' children, who modeled for her.

35. At the start of his career, Rockwell also published in *American Boy*, *St. Nicholas*, *American Farm and Fireside*, the *Popular Monthly*, *Literary Digest*, *Life*, *Judge*, *Leslie's Weekly*, the *American Magazine*, and *Collier's*.

36. Buechner, *Norman Rockwell: A Sixty Year Retrospective*, 52.

37. Finch, *Norman Rockwell: 322 Magazine Covers*, 8-11.

38. Rockwell, *My Adventures as an Illustrator*, 34.

39. Laurie Norton Moffat, "Norman Rockwell: Illustrator of America's Heritage," *American History Illustrated* 21, no. 8 (December 1986), 27.

40. Mott, *A History of American Magazines* IV (1885-1905), 688; Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions*, 154.

41. George Horace Lorimer, "Is Success Personal?" *The Saturday Evening Post* (April 10, 1920), 30.

42. Advertisement, *The Saturday Evening Post* (January 20, 1923), 86-87.

43. Jan Cohn, *Covers of* The Saturday Evening Post*: Seventy Years of Outstanding Illustration from America's Favorite Magazine* (New York: Viking, 1995), 2.

44. Flythe, Foreword, *The* Saturday Evening Post *Norman Rockwell Book*, vii.

45. Mott, *A History of American Magazines* IV, 696.

46. Jan Cohn, *Creating America*, 165.

47. Illustration historian James J. Best uses this term in describing these illustrators' "signature" cover work (*American Popular Illustration: A Reference Guide* [Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984], 95).

48. Guptill, *Norman Rockwell, Illustrator*, 79.

49. Rockwell, *My Adventures as an Illustrator*, 34.

50. *Norman Rockwell and* The Saturday Evening Post *(1916-1928)*, 27.

51. In his study of the artist's "fashioning of American masculinity" during the 1910s and 1920s, Eric J. Segal divides these "competing versions of white, middle-class American masculinity" into "sartorial masculinity that is based on fashion and taste" and "corporal masculinity," a matter of "bodily fortitude" ("Norman Rockwell and the Fashioning of American Masculinity," *Art Bulletin* 78, no. 4 [December 1996], 633).

52. Quoted in Guptill, *Norman Rockwell, Illustrator*, 152.

53. Segal, "Norman Rockwell and the Fashioning of American Masculinity," 637.

54. John Higham, "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890s," in *Writing American History: Essays on Modern Scholarship* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 82.

55. Theodore Roosevelt, "The Strenuous Life," in *The Strenuous Life: Essays and Addresses* (New York: The Century Co., 1901), 1-21. The ideal of an outdoor life was manifested in organizations such as the new Boy Scouts of America, whose annual calendar Rockwell illustrated for 53 years.

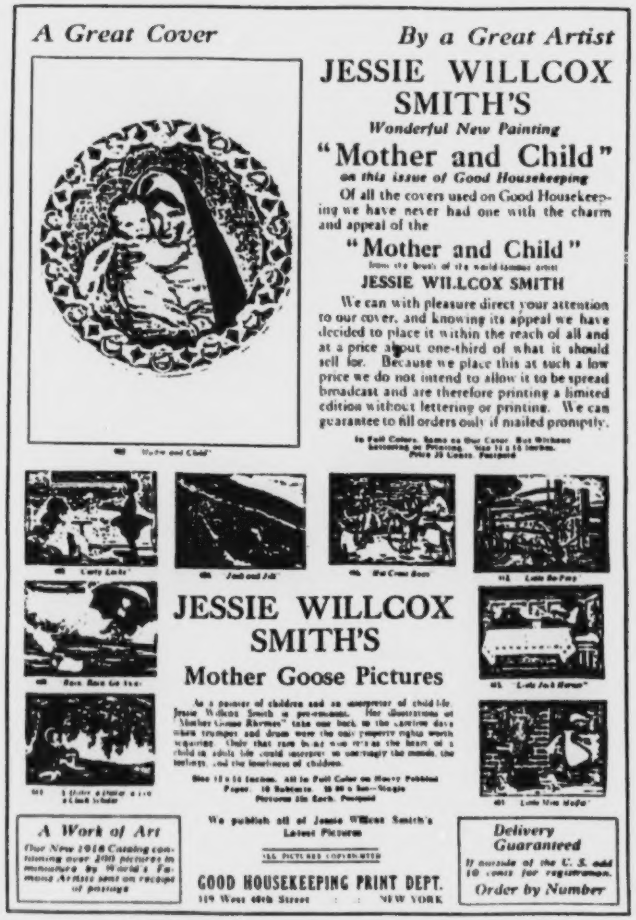
56. Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 164. Kimmel is referring to claims first made in psychologist G. Stanley Hall's 1904 landmark study *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*, 2 vols. (New York: Appleton, 1904).

57. Marsh, *Suburban Lives*, 76.

58. Advertisement, *The Saturday Evening Post* (May 19, 1923), 94-95.

59. Quoted in Verlyn Klinkenborg, "Pyle and Rockwell--Totally American, Yet Not at All Alike," *Smithsonian* 25, no. 4 (1994), 93.

60. Finch, *Norman Rockwell: 322 Magazine Covers*, 9.



A Great Cover *By a Great Artist*

JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH'S

Wonderful New Painting

"Mother and Child"

on this issue of Good Housekeeping

Of all the covers used on Good Housekeeping we have never had one with the charm and appeal of the

"Mother and Child"

JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH

We can with pleasure direct your attention to our cover, and knowing its appeal we have decided to place it within the reach of all and at a price about one-third of what it should sell for. Because we place this at such a low price we do not intend to allow it to be spread broadcast and are therefore printing a limited edition without lettering or printing. We can guarantee to fill orders only if mailed promptly.

JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH'S

Mother Goose Pictures

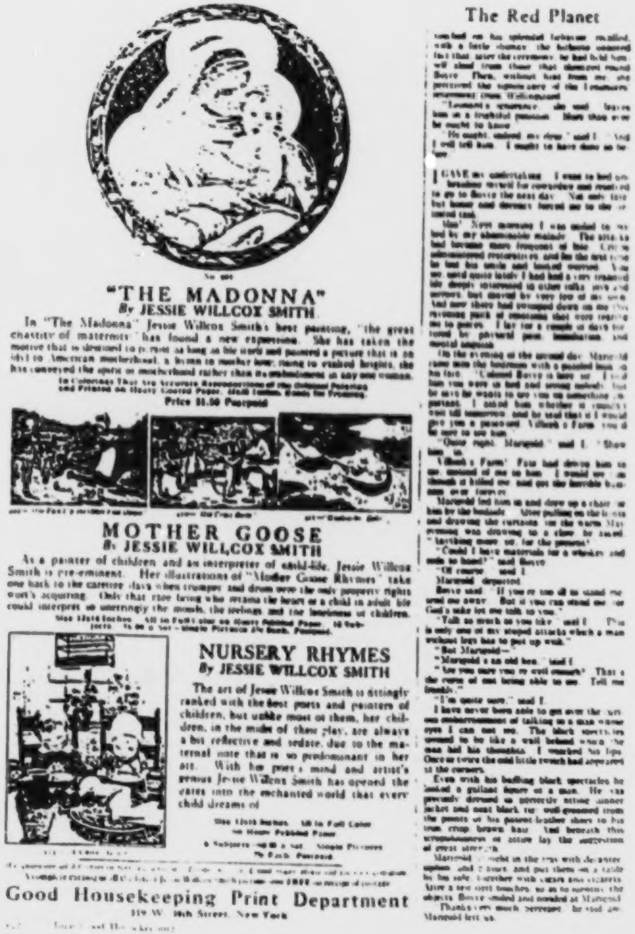
A Work of Art

Delivery Guaranteed

Order by Number

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING PRINT DEPT.

n. d.



The Red Planet

"THE MADONNA"

By JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH

MOTHER GOOSE

By JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH

As a painter of children and an interpreter of child-life, Jessie Willcox Smith is pre-eminent. Her illustrations of "Mother Goose Rhymes" take one back to the carefree days when trumpet and drum were the only property rights worth acquiring. Only that rare being who retains the heart of a child in adult life could interpret so unerringly the moods, the feelings and the loneliness of children.

NURSERY RHYMES

By JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH

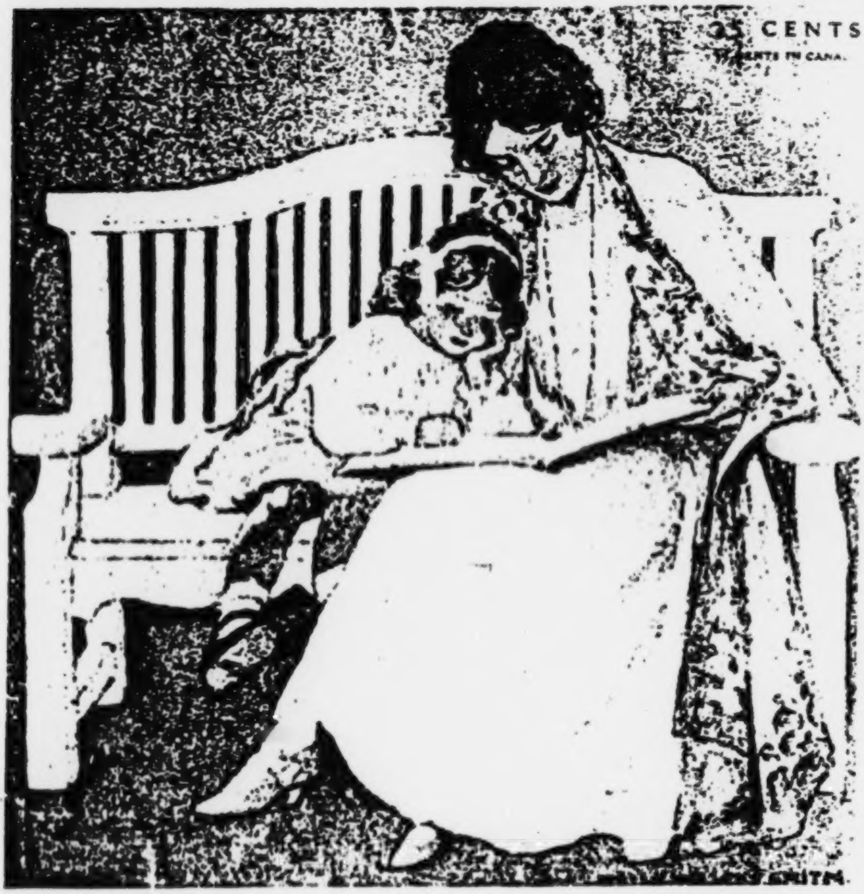
The art of Jessie Willcox Smith is fittingly ranked with the best poets and painters of children, but unlike most of them, her children, in the midst of their play, are always a bit reflective and sedate, due to the maternal note that is so predominant in her art. With her poet's mind and artist's genius Jessie Willcox Smith has opened the gates into the enchanted world that every child dreams of.

Good Housekeeping Print Department

127

FIGURE 1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

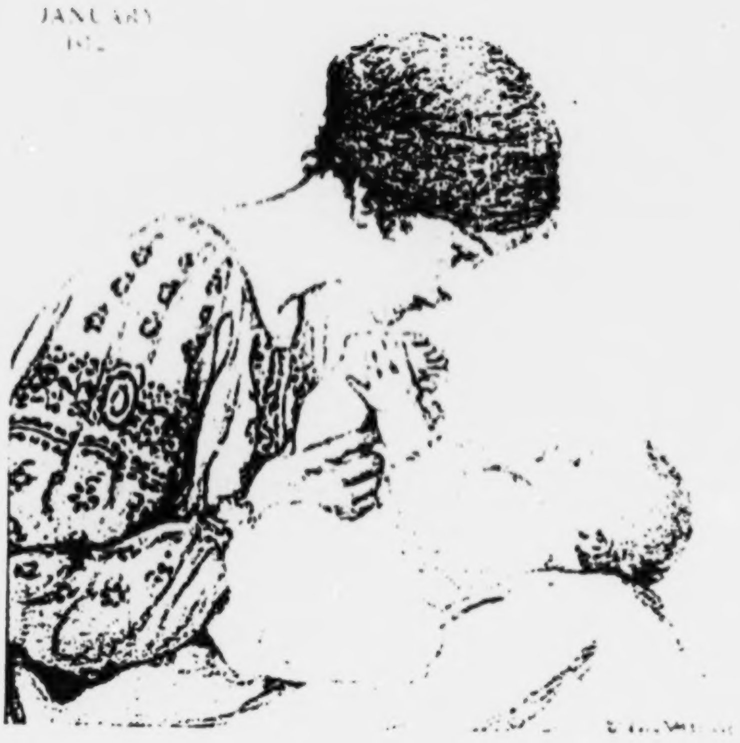

CENTS
SMITH

9. Cover illustration for *Good Housekeeping*, June, 1925

FIGURE 2

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

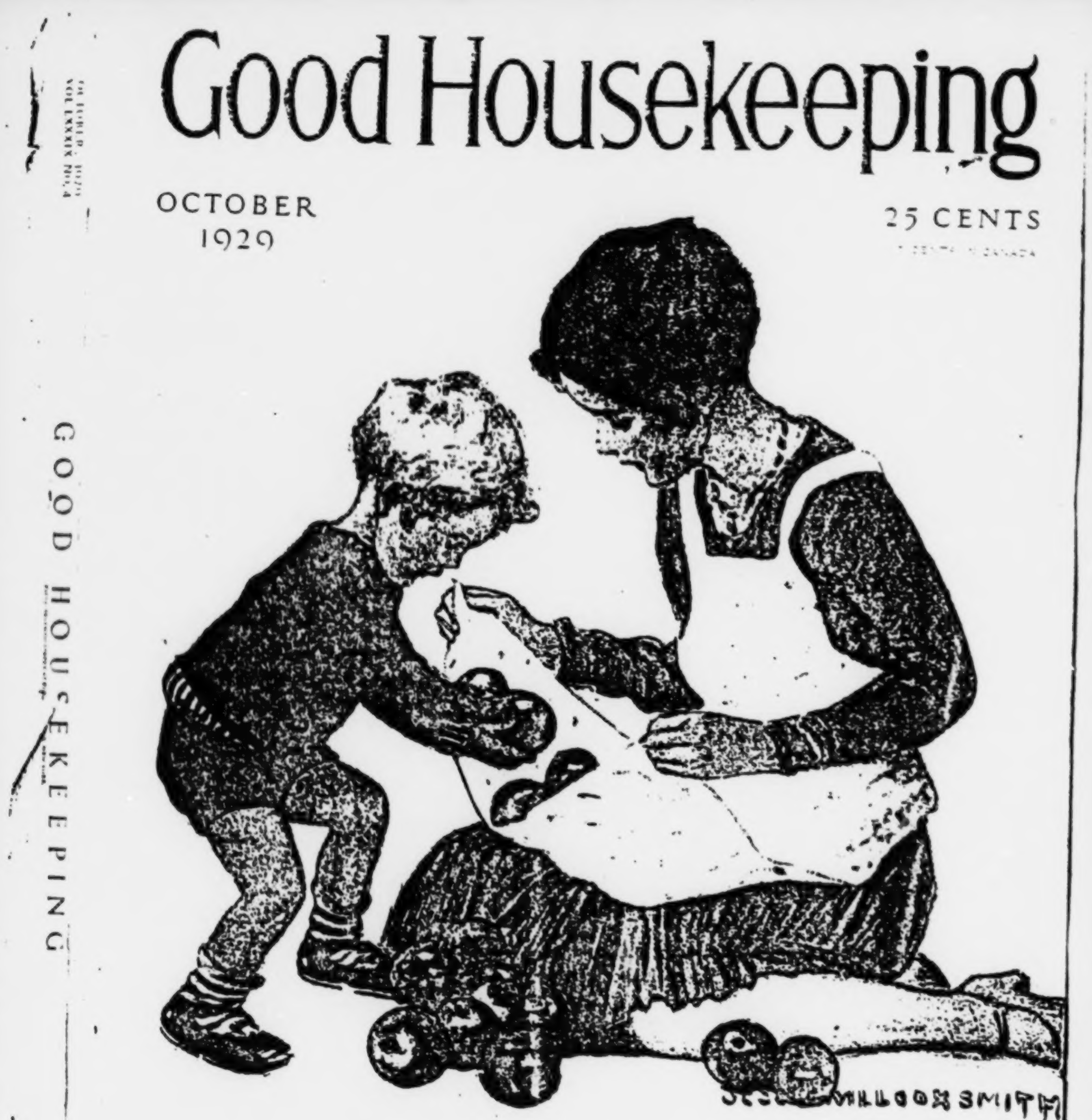
7. Cover illustration for *Good Housekeeping*, January, 1928



(17)

FIGURE 3

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



Good Housekeeping

OCTOBER
1929

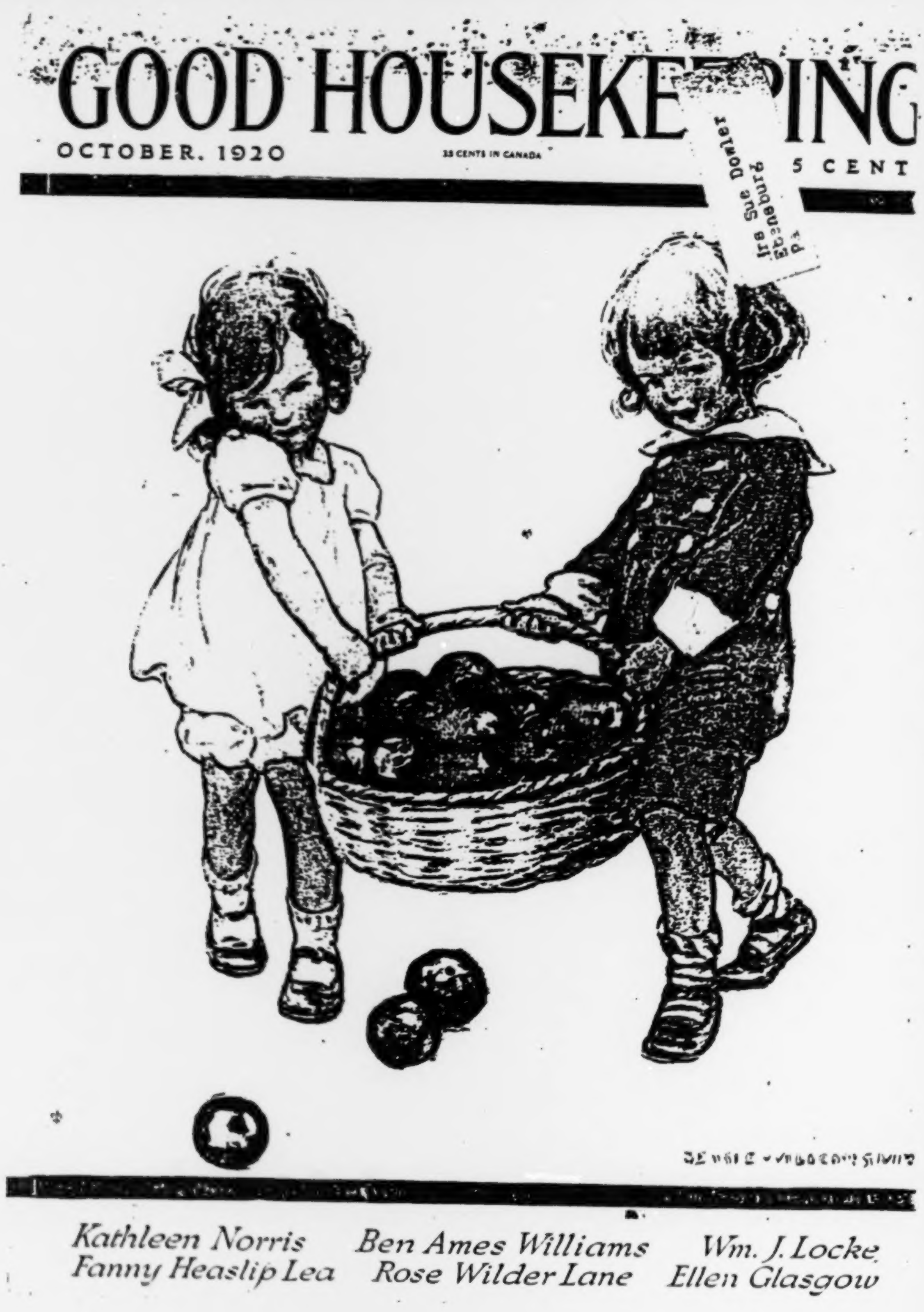
25 CENTS

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING
JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH

CASTLES IN SPAIN By Frances Parkinson Keyes
Mariel Brady ~ Frederic F. Van de Water ~ Sarah Addington
Emma-Lindsay Squier ~ Konrad Bercovici
PARIS AUTUMN OPENINGS

FIGURE 4

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

OCTOBER, 1920

35 CENTS IN CANADA

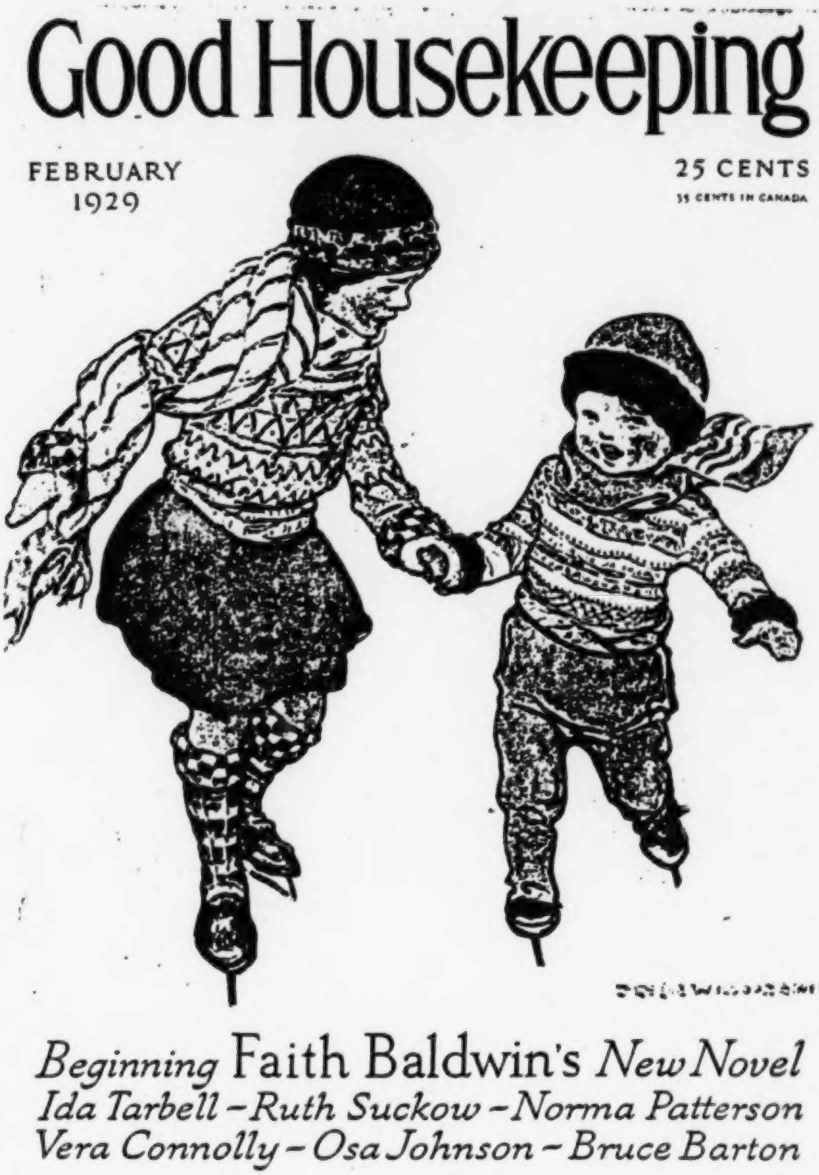
5 CENT

Ira Sue Dowler
Ebensburg
Pa

Kathleen Norris *Ben Ames Williams* *Wm. J. Locke*
Fanny Heaslip Lea *Rose Wilder Lane* *Ellen Glasgow*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FIGURE 5



Good Housekeeping

FEBRUARY
1929

25 CENTS
35 CENTS IN CANADA

Beginning Faith Baldwin's *New Novel*
Ida Tarbell – Ruth Suckow – Norma Patterson
Vera Connolly – Osa Johnson – Bruce Barton

71. Cover, *Good Housekeeping*, February, 1929

FIGURE 6

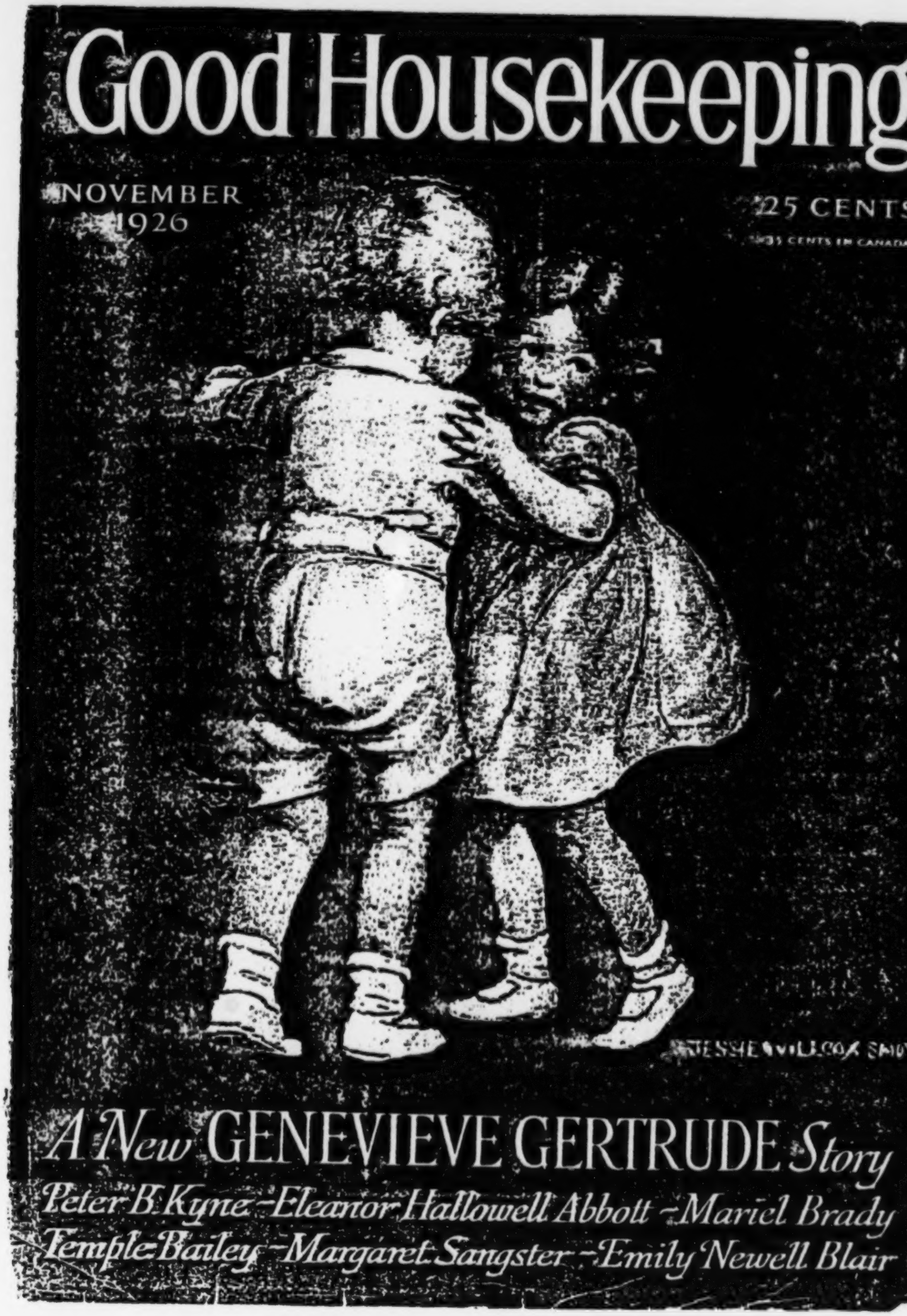
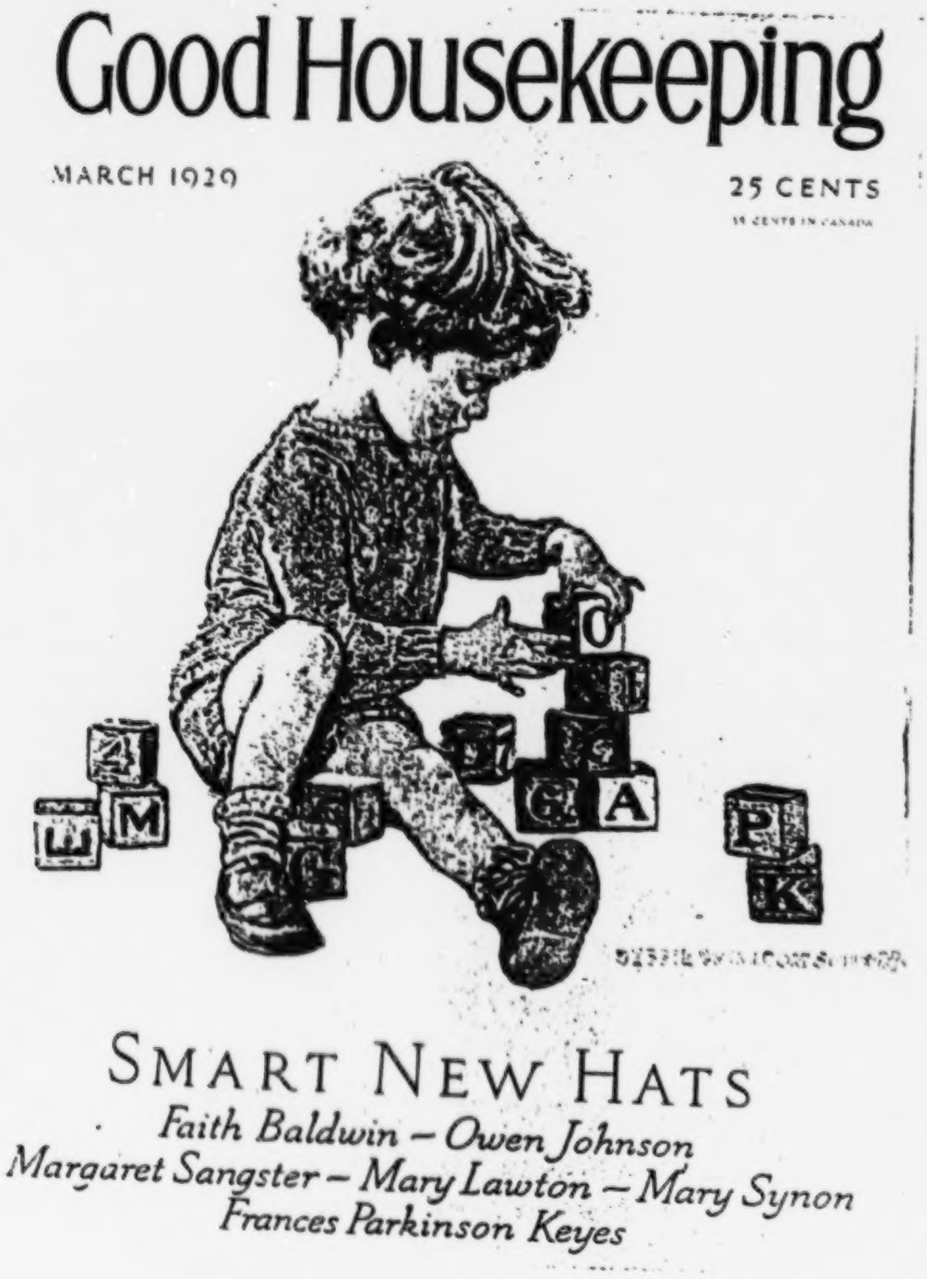

Good Housekeeping
NOVEMBER
1926
25 CENTS
35 CENTS IN CANADA
JESSIE WILLCOX SMI
A New GENEVIEVE GERTRUDE Story
Peter B. Kyne – Eleanor Hallowell Abbott – Mariel Brady
Temple Bailey – Margaret Sangster – Emily Newell Blair

FIGURE 7

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



Good Housekeeping

MARCH 1929

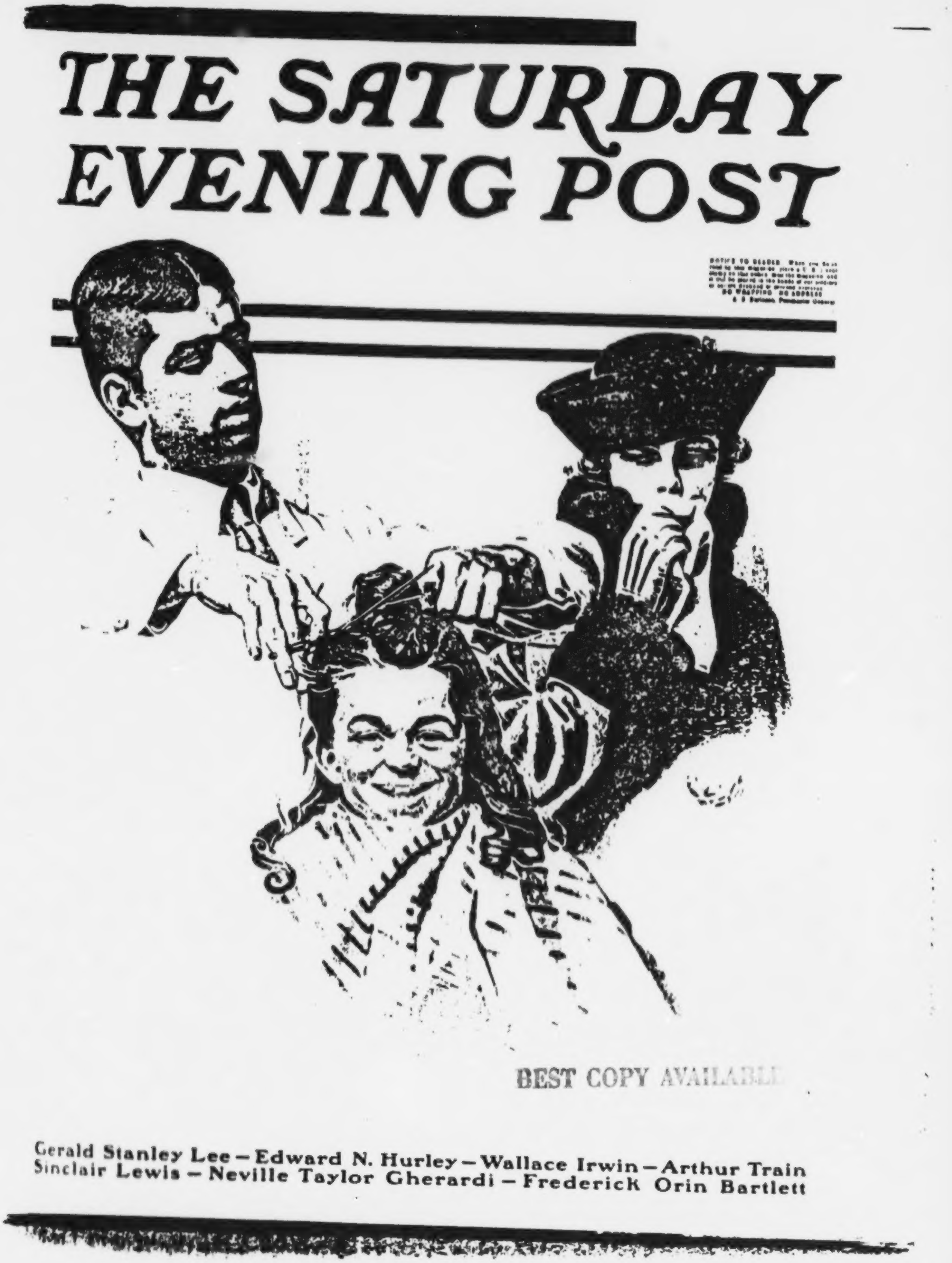
25 CENTS

35 CENTS IN CANADA

SMART NEW HATS

Faith Baldwin – Owen Johnson
Margaret Sangster – Mary Lawton – Mary Synon
Frances Parkinson Keyes

FIGURE 8



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Gerald Stanley Lee – Edward N. Hurley – Wallace Irwin – Arthur Train
Sinclair Lewis – Neville Taylor Gherardi – Frederick Orin Bartlett

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FIGURE 9
(August 10, 1918)

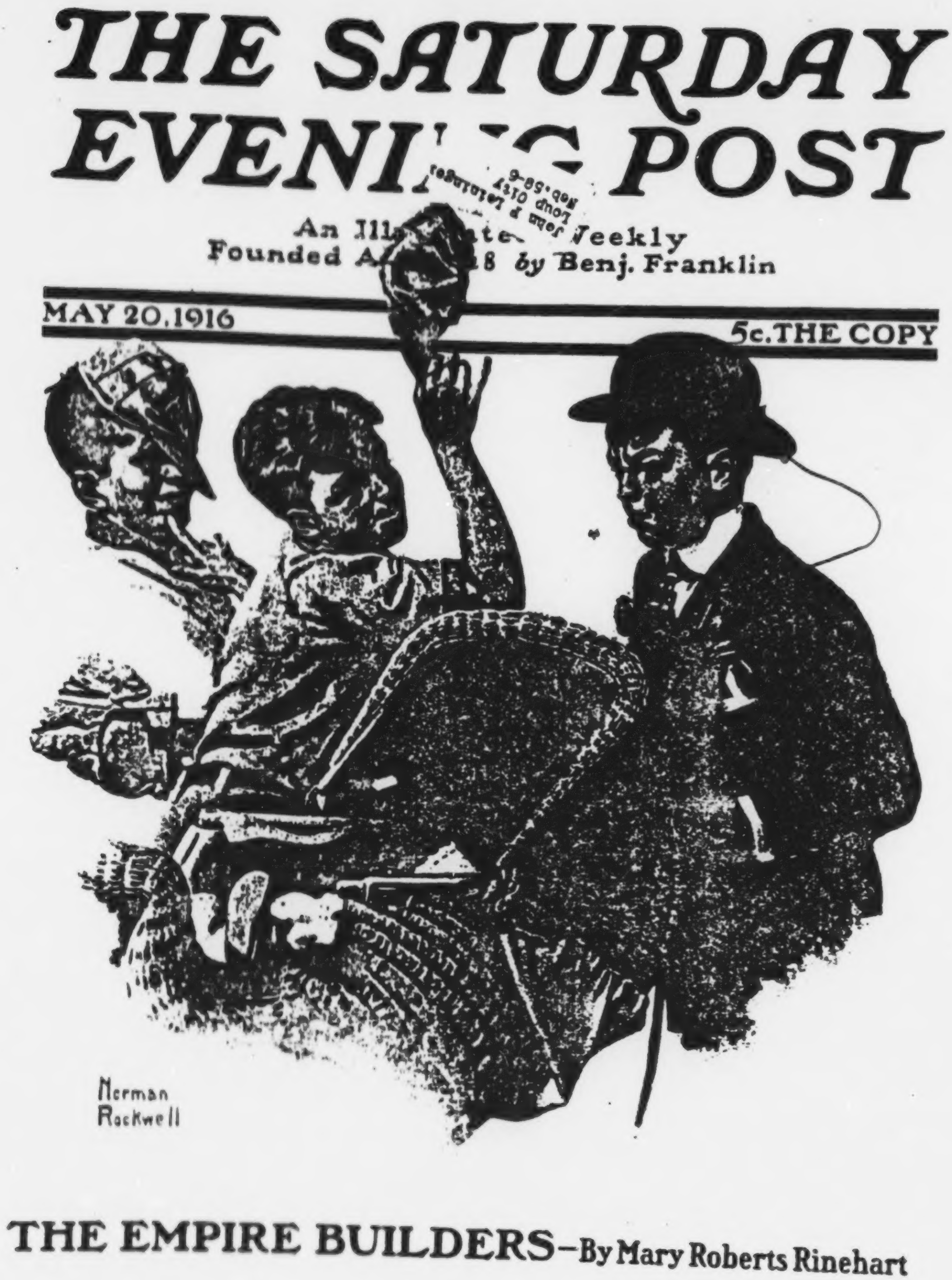
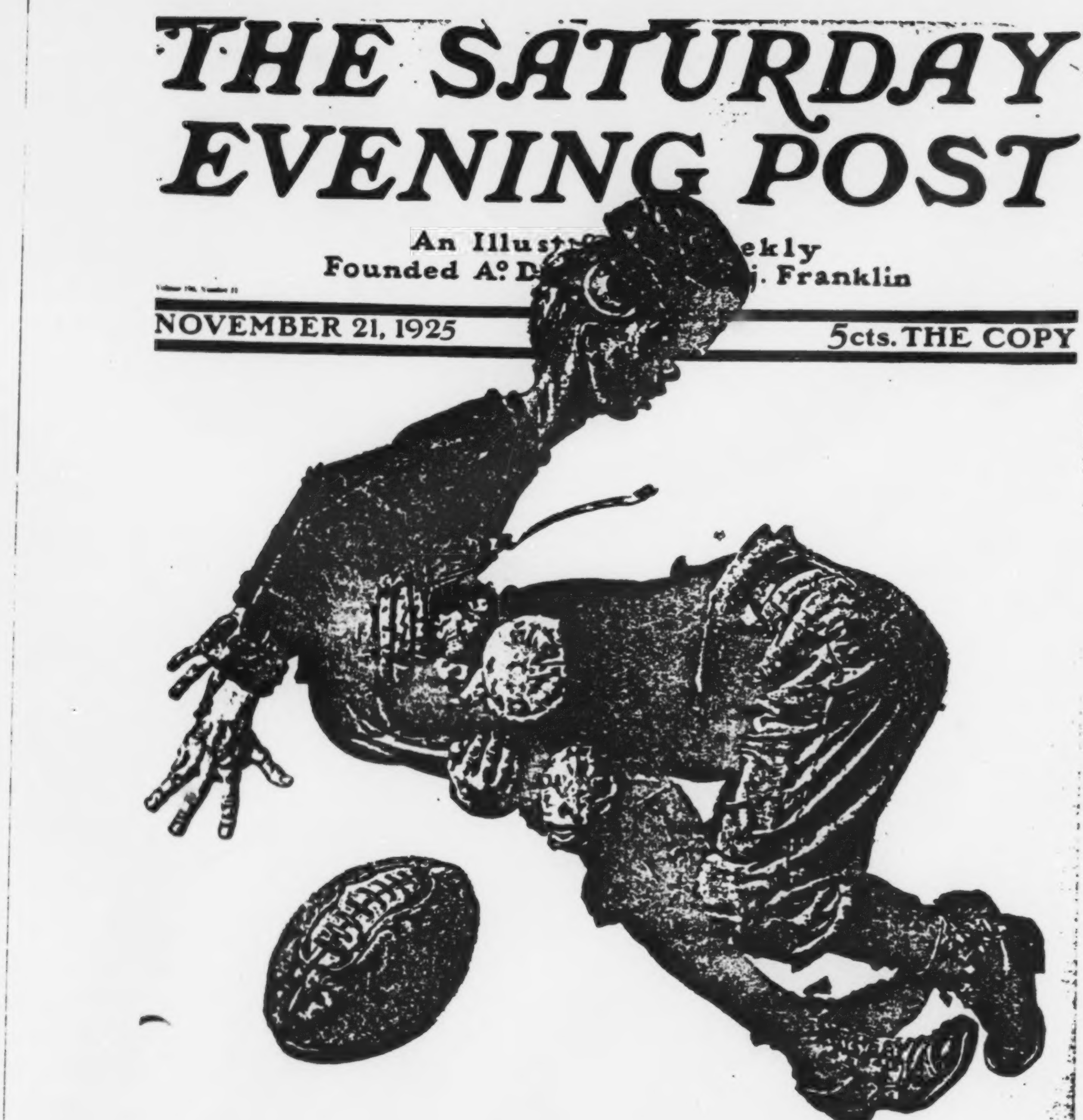

THE SATURDAY
EVENING POST
An Illustrated Weekly
Founded A.D. 1728 by Benj. Franklin
MAY 20, 1916
5c. THE COPY
Norman
Rockwell
THE EMPIRE BUILDERS—By Mary Roberts Rinehart

FIGURE 10



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

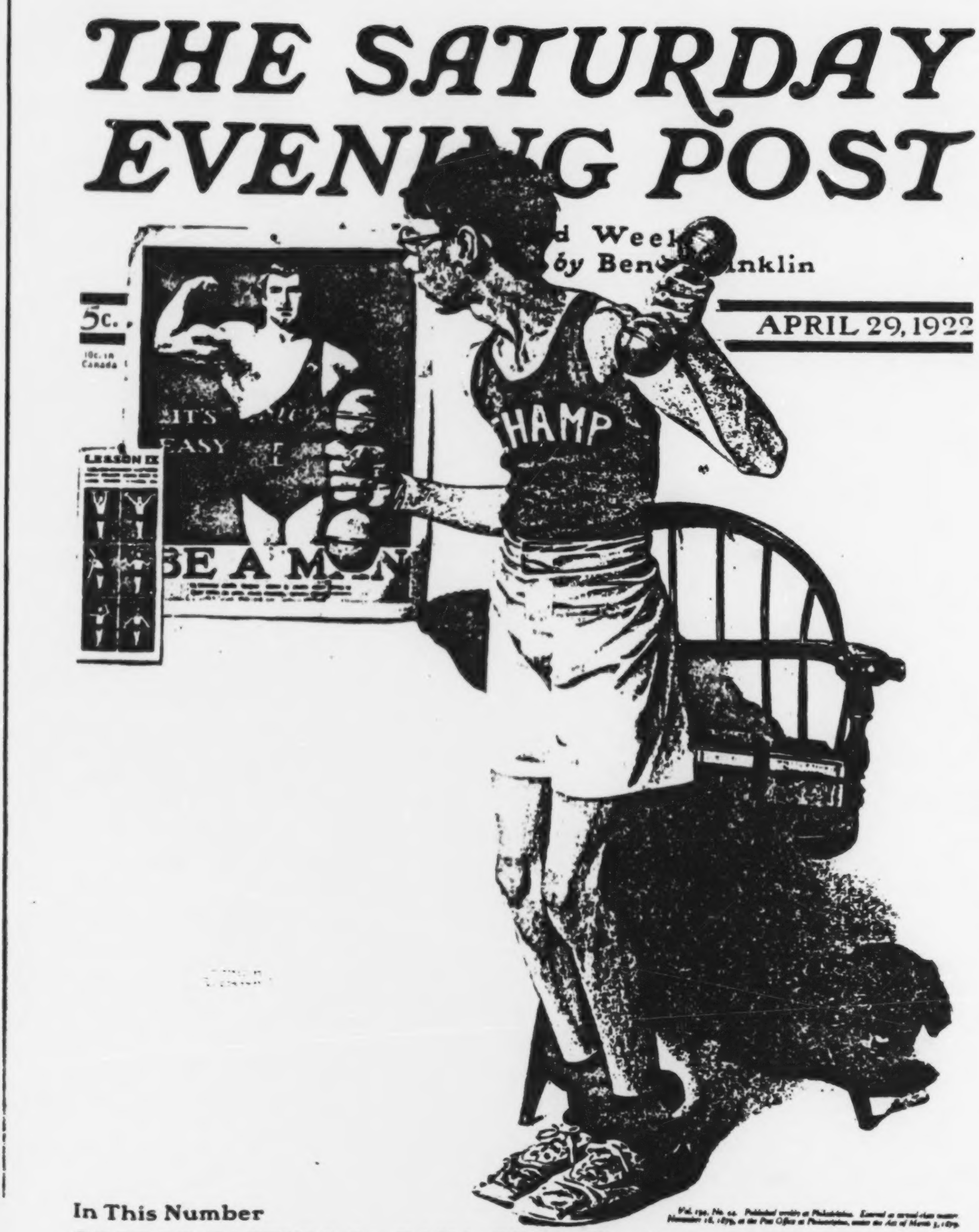
An Illust ekly
Founded A° D j. Franklin

NOVEMBER 21, 1925

5cts. THE COPY

Norman Rockwell

FIGURE 11



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

d Week
by Ben nklin

5c.
10c. in Canada

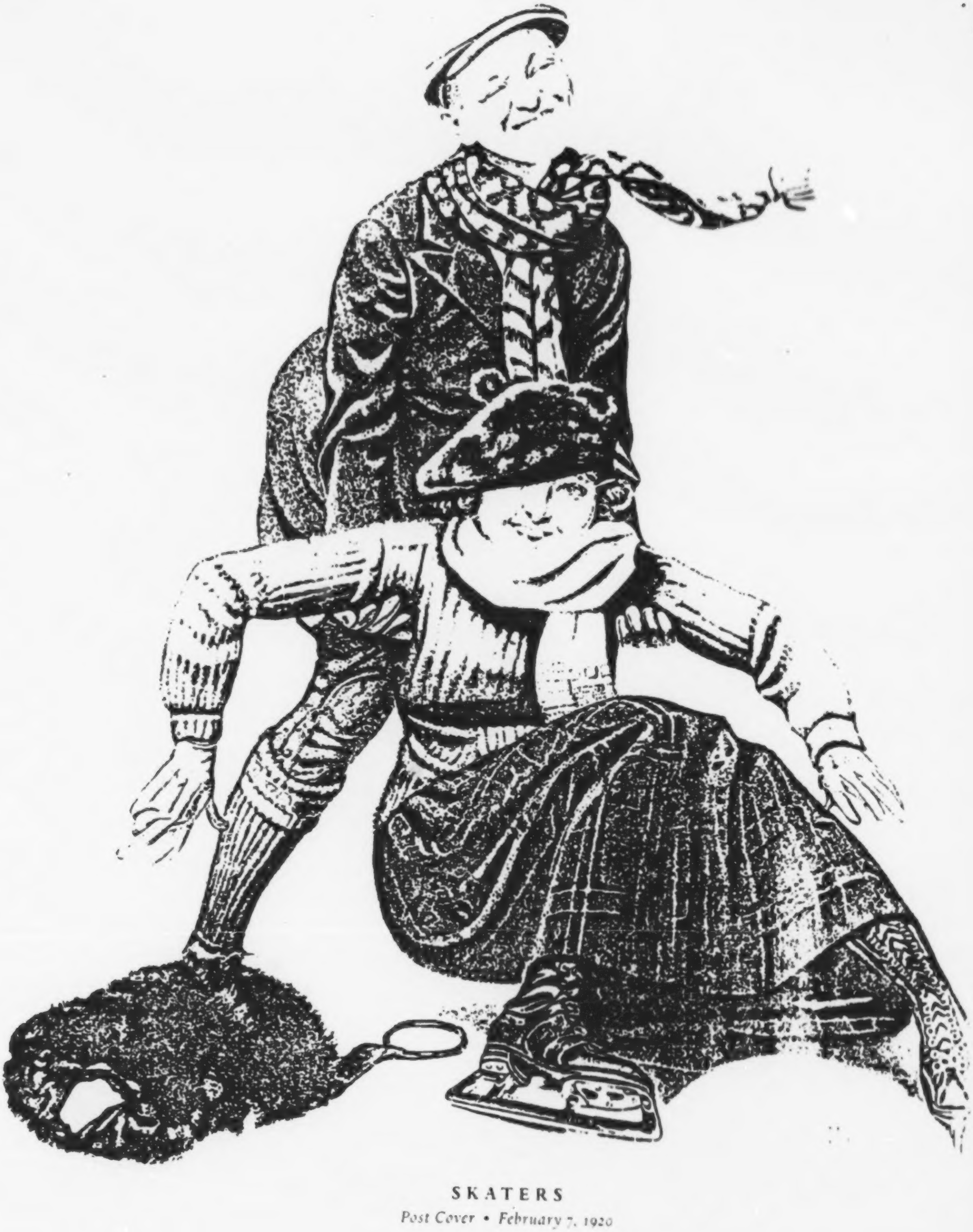
APRIL 29, 1922

IT'S
EASY
BE A MAN
LESSON IX
CHAMP

In This Number

GEORGE PATTULLO – DANA BURNET – MARGUERITE CURTIS
ICHARD CONNELL – EVERETT RHODES CASTLE – JULIAN STREET

FIGURE 12



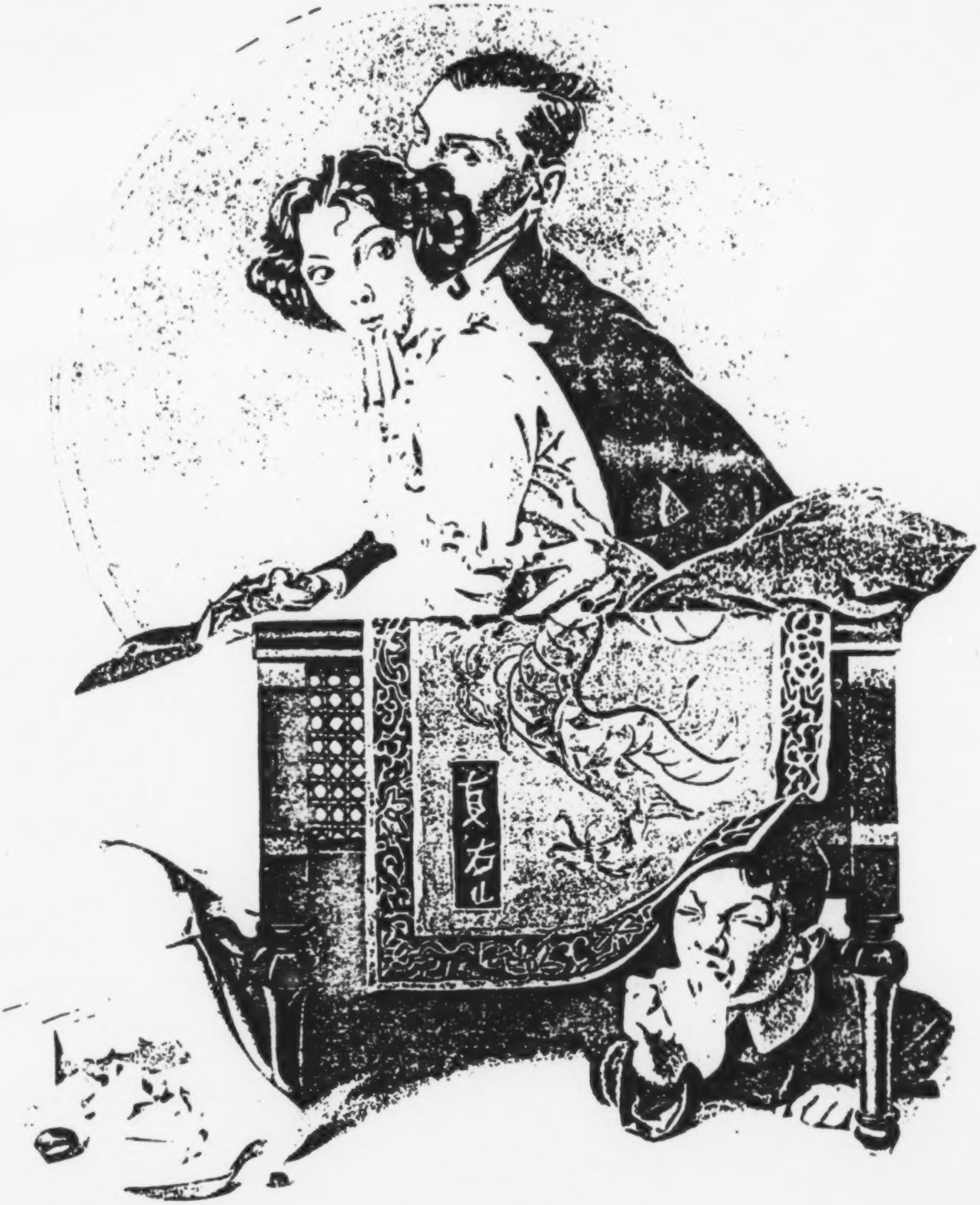
SKATERS

Post Cover • February 7, 1920

52

FIGURE 13

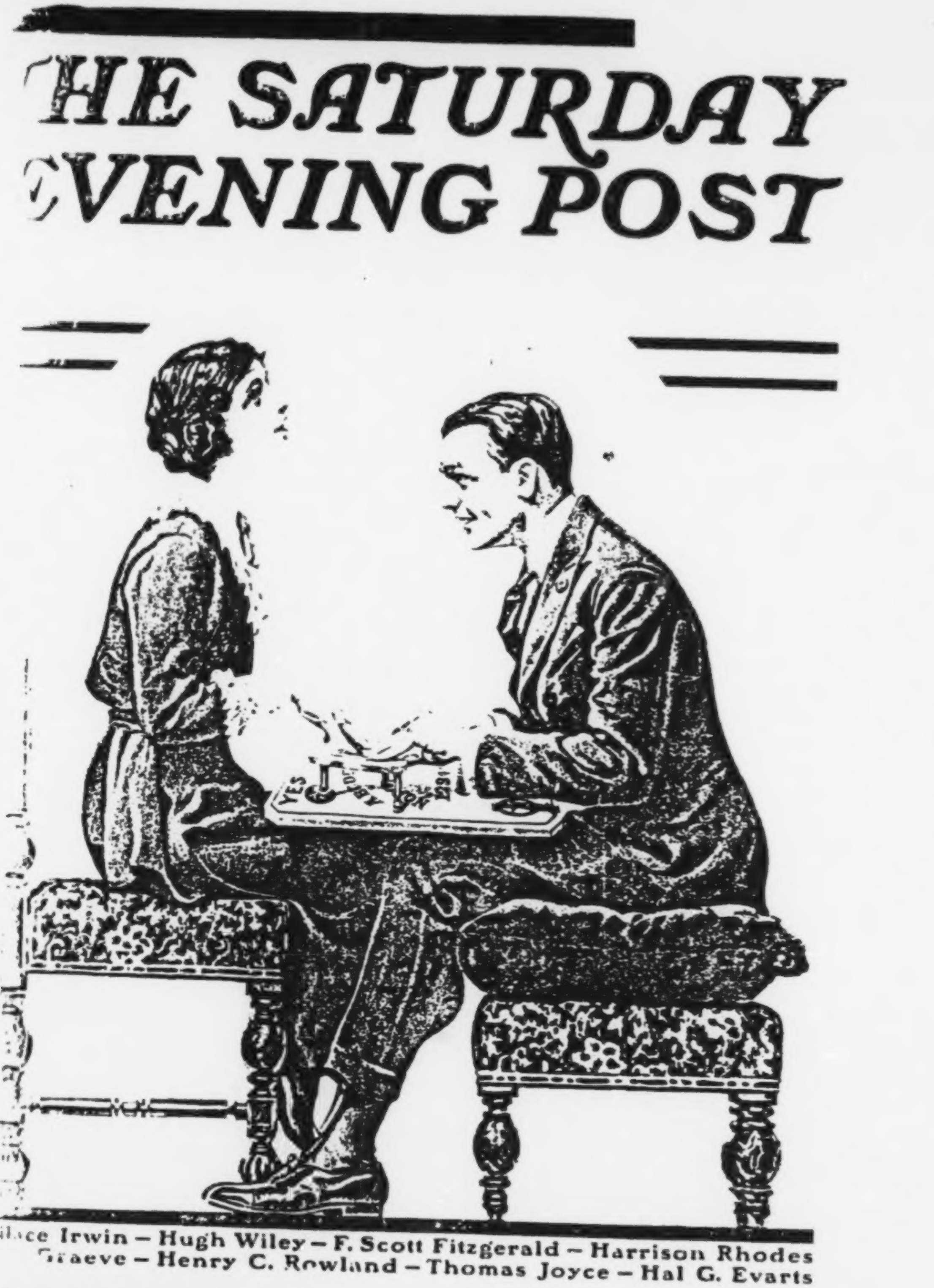
BEST COPY AVAILABLE



SNEEZING SPY
Post Cover • October 1, 1921

FIGURE 14

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

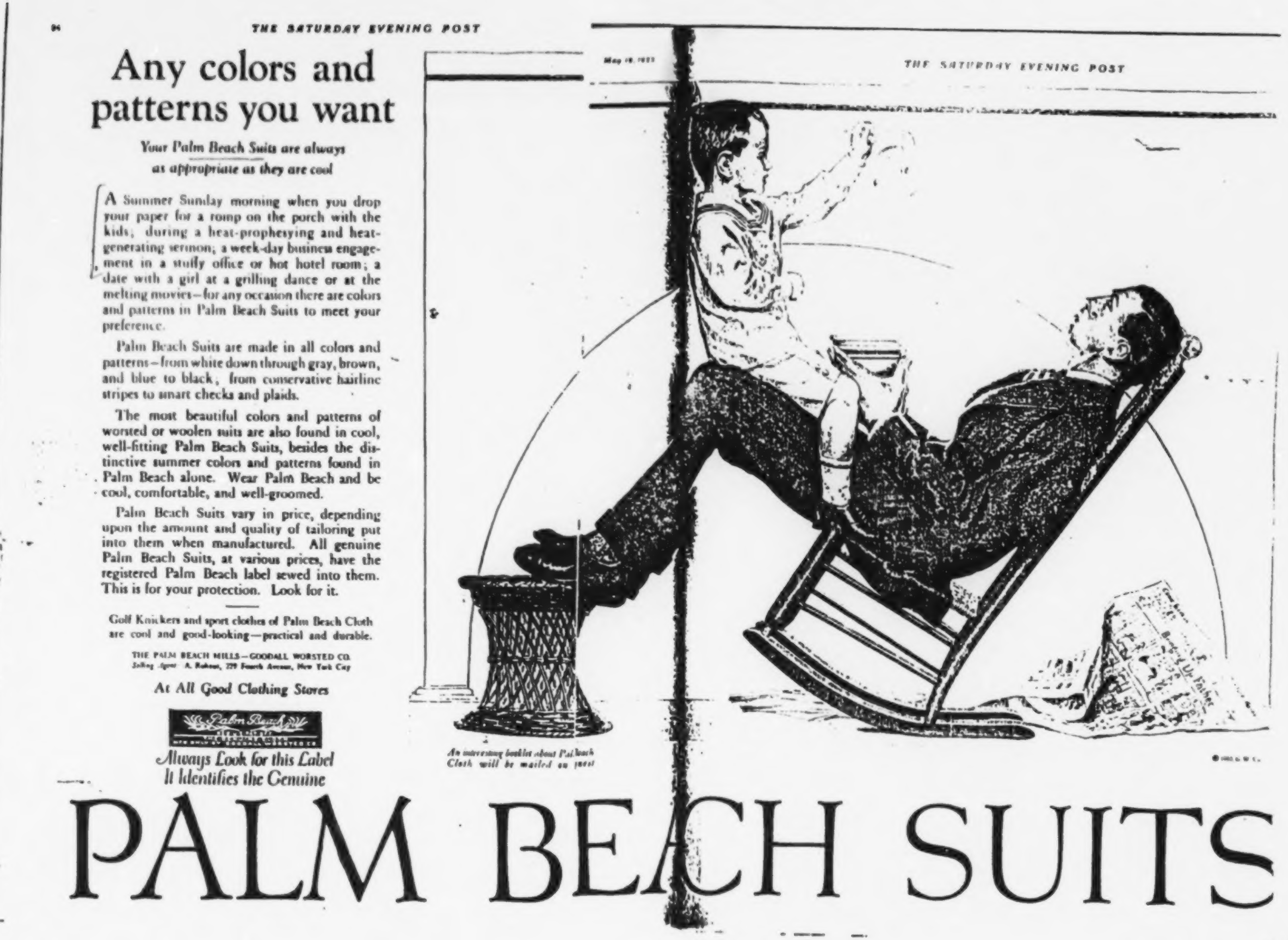


HE SATURDAY
VENING POST

llace Irwin – Hugh Wiley – F. Scott Fitzgerald – Harrison Rhodes
Graeve – Henry C. Rowland – Thomas Joyce – Hal G. Evarts

FIGURE 15
(May 1, 1920)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



94 THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Any colors and patterns you want

Your Palm Beach Suits are always as appropriate as they are cool

A Summer Sunday morning when you drop your paper for a romp on the porch with the kids; during a heat-prophesying and heat-generating sermon; a week-day business engagement in a stuffy office or hot hotel room; a date with a girl at a grilling dance or at the melting movies—for any occasion there are colors and patterns in Palm Beach Suits to meet your preference.

Palm Beach Suits are made in all colors and patterns—from white down through gray, brown, and blue to black; from conservative hairline stripes to smart checks and plaids.

The most beautiful colors and patterns of worsted or woolen suits are also found in cool, well-fitting Palm Beach Suits, besides the distinctive summer colors and patterns found in Palm Beach alone. Wear Palm Beach and be cool, comfortable, and well-groomed.

Palm Beach Suits vary in price, depending upon the amount and quality of tailoring put into them when manufactured. All genuine Palm Beach Suits, at various prices, have the registered Palm Beach label sewed into them. This is for your protection. Look for it.

Golf Knickers and sport clothes of Palm Beach Cloth are cool and good-looking—practical and durable.

THE PALM BEACH MILLS—GOODALL WORSTED CO.
Selling Agent: A. Rohaut, 229 Fourth Avenue, New York City

At All Good Clothing Stores

Palm Beach

Always Look for this Label
It Identifies the Genuine

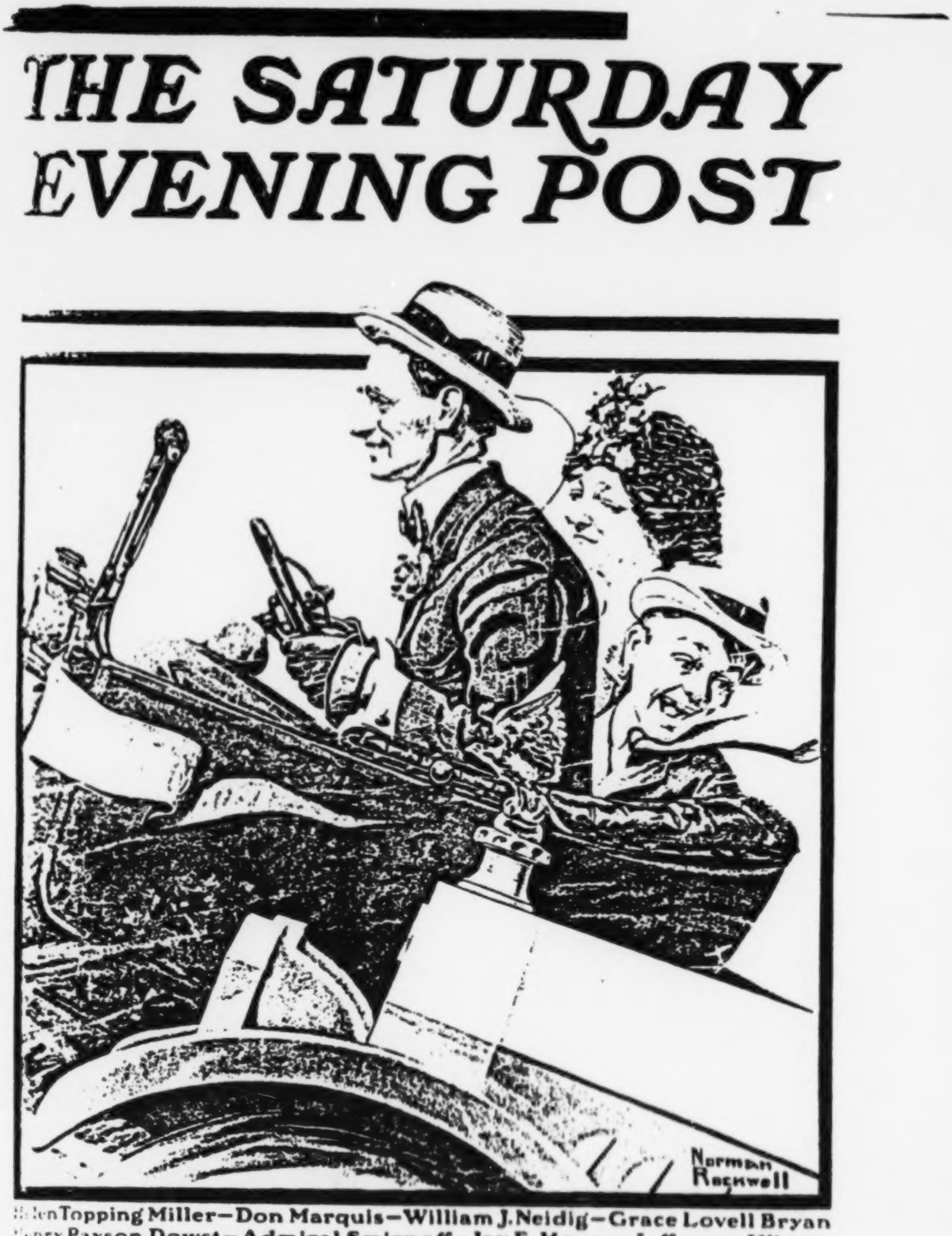
May [illegible] THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An interesting booklet about Palm Beach Cloth will be mailed on request

PALM BEACH SUITS

FIGURE 16

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

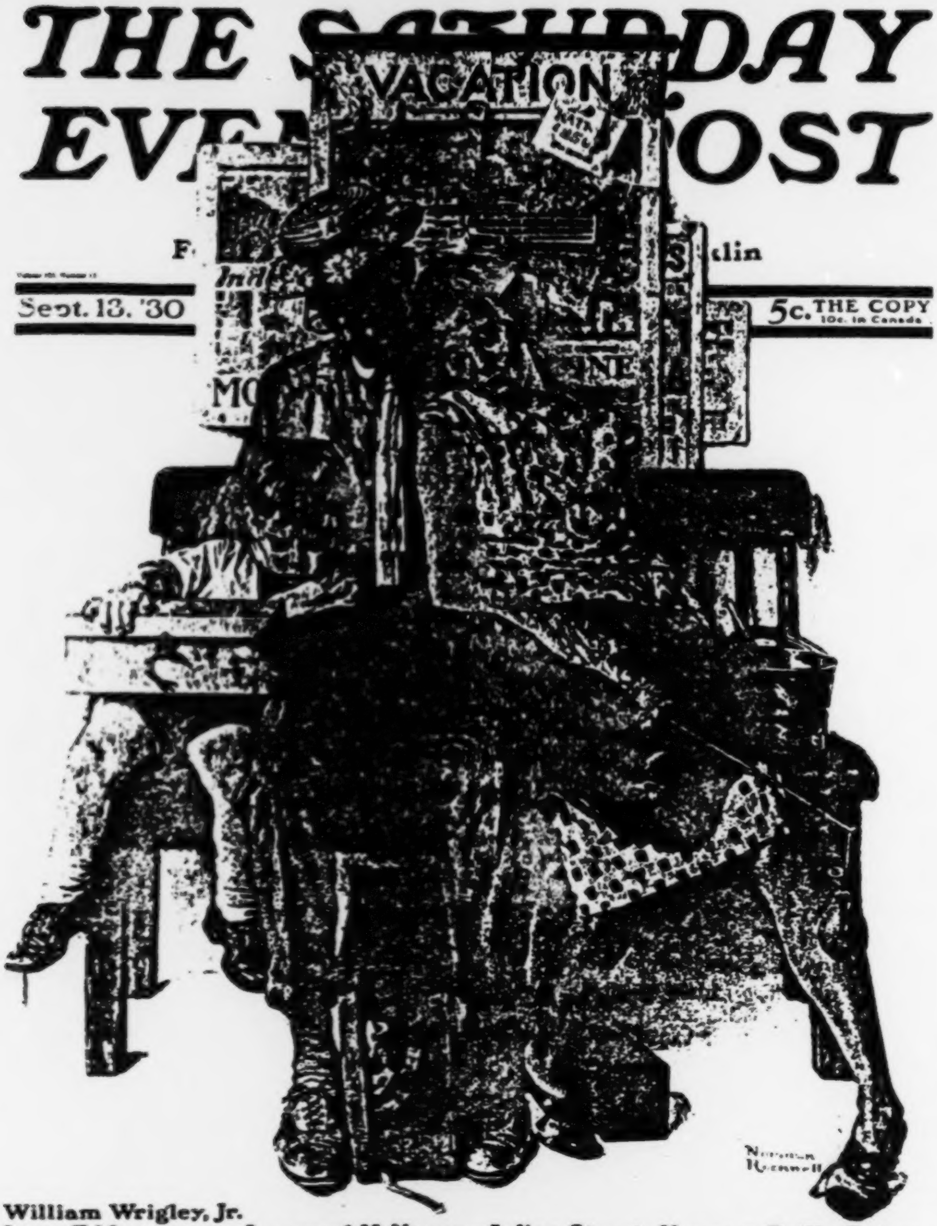


THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Helen Topping Miller—Don Marquis—William J. Neidig—Grace Lovell Bryan
Henry Payson Dowst—Admiral Smirnoff—Jay E. House—Jefferson Winter

FIGURE 17
(July 31, 1920)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Sept. 13, '30

5c. THE COPY 10c. in Canada

William Wrigley, Jr.
Isaac F. Marcosson—Leonard H. Nason—Julian Street—Norman Reilly Raine
Clarence Budington Kelland—Nunnally Johnson—Frederick Hazlitt Brennan

Above
Family Home from Vacation
Post cover, 1930

FIGURE 18

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reviewing The Record: What Magazine Letters to the Editor Said About Journalism in 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992.

by
Brian Thornton, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Department of Mass Communications, Midwestern State University
3410 Taft Blvd., Wichita Falls, Texas 76308 (940) 397-4797
Home address: 4411 Montego Drive, Wichita Falls, Texas 76308
Home phone: (940) 696-2248
(940) 397-4797 Work
Fax (940) 397-4511

E-mail fthorntb@nexus.mwsu.edu

A paper accepted for presentation to the Magazine Division as part of the AEJMC Annual Conference in Baltimore, Md., Aug. 5-9, 1998.

Reviewing the Record: What Magazine Letters to the Editor Said About Journalism in 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992.

Public opinion surveys and journalism trade magazines such as Columbia Journalism Review (CJR), and American Journalism Review (AJR) have documented abundant animosity by readers toward journalists. For example, a recent CJR cover story suggested many Americans regard modern journalists as "a generation of vipers."[1] And a 1995 AJR article said journalists are "under siege" from angry consumers of news. The story quoted six news executives who said Americans feel "mistrustful, resentful, hostile and angry" toward journalists. Driving this point home, Andrew Kohut, director of the Times Mirror Center for the People & The Press, was quoted as saying people believe the press hinders the country's efforts to solve its problems.[2] The mainstream press has reported much the same story. For example, Atlantic Monthly ran a cover story in 1996 explaining "Why Americans Hate The Media."[3] And in the wake of the death of England's Princess Diana there was a spate of stories saying the public was fed up with journalists who were seen as "barracuda," "jackals," piranha," and "vultures" feeding on the misfortunes of others.[4] Another example of public antipathy toward the press may be unfolding in the scandals embroiling the Clinton presidency: President Clinton's soaring popularity, despite charges of sexual misconduct, has been interpreted as a backlash against the press. In this regard, various public opinion polls assert that people see reporters as "too intrusive" and "sensationalistic" in that they pry into the private lives of public officials.[5]

While polls and articles are valuable second-hand barometers of public opinion, a vital element is absent from these examinations: What is missing is the voice of consumers of news directly expressing their own thoughts about the reporting business. How do readers make sense of what they read? Opinion polls force people to choose between limited options. But when given the ability to speak with their own voice, and in their own words, what do readers say? What have readers and viewers of news across the country written about the press, for instance, and has that opinion changed over the past 30 years - for example, reflecting more anti-press sentiment in the '90s than during the height of the Watergate scandal or during the Kennedy administration?

---

[1] Paul Starobin, "A Generation of Vipers," Columbia Journalism Review, March/April 1995, 25.

[2] Linda Fibich, "Under Siege," American Journalism Review, September 1995, 16.

[3] James Fallows, "Why Americans Hate The Media," Atlantic, February 1996, 45-73. This article was an excerpt from Fallows' book, Breaking the News: How the Media Undermine Democracy (New York: Pantheon, 1996).

[4] Jacqueline Sharkey, "The Diana Aftermath," American Journalism Review, November, 1997, 19.

[5] "What We Do Now," Columbia Journalism Review, March/April 1998, 25.

One way to tap directly into public discussion of journalism is to look at the historical record of published letters to the editor. Media scholar David B. Hill argues there is a strong link between public opinion and opinions expressed in letters to the editor.[6] Hill's assertion may be problematic, given the possible capriciousness of editorial selection of letters for publication. Nevertheless, the historical record of published letters can provide valuable insights into the tone or themes of public discussion of journalism and how those themes changed over time. To discover just what the themes have been over the past 30 years, and how they may have changed, this paper studies public expressions about journalism and journalistic standards by looking at the historical record of a selection of published letters to the editor from 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992.

To obtain a national view of public sentiment about journalism, letters to the editor published in 10 national news magazines were examined in this study. Letters to the editor from news magazine readers were studied because these letters come from all parts of the country. In any given issue of a national news magazine such as Time, letters might appear from readers from Bangor to Honolulu and nearly all points in between. As a result, magazine readers can and do engage in a nationwide discussion of issues rather than parochial conversations about regional issues. Presidential candidates have long known this - and fought hard to get stories printed in news magazines rather than newspapers when they want their message to reach people from all walks of life and to resonate throughout the nation.[7]

Since news magazines usually come out weekly or monthly, the information in them tends to summarize and reflect on longer trends than TV or newspapers generally do. This same reflective quality is likely true in letters to the editors - that is, magazine editors who are trained to seek out articles that are reflective of larger national trends may be inclined to print letters that are also more reflective of large issues.[8] Further, news magazines tend to give more space to more letters to the editor than newspapers and allow those letters to run longer.[9]

---

[6] David B. Hill, "Letter Opinion on ERA," Public Opinion Quarterly 45 (Fall 1981), 384-92.

[7] Michael B. Grossman and Marth J. Kumar, Portraying the President: The White House and the News Media (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

[8] Lawrence J. Mullen, "An Overview of Political Content Analysis of Magazines," in The American Magazine (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1995), 40.

One driving purpose of this research is to find out how many published letters discussed journalism, what letter writers said about the press, and whether there were any recurring themes. A further goal is to discover whether public discussion about the press changed over the 30-year period. To answer these questions this research examined all the letters printed in 10 popular news magazines - a total of 15,024 letters. Out of this group, the letters that discussed journalism - 3,689 - were analyzed in greater detail. The purpose is to add some historical context to the ongoing conversation about journalism by magazine readers.

Journalism historian Hazel Dicken-Garcia argues such study is needed because most media ethics literature lacks historical perspective.[10] Further, the voice of the audience speaking about journalism standards has been almost entirely missing from journalism history.

Even as this examination of published letters to the editor is undertaken, however, it must first be admitted that the historical study of such letters offers many challenges. For example, the letters do not reflect the entire public conversation about journalism that took place in the past. But as journalism historian David Nord writes, letters to the editor provide a record of at least a portion of the ongoing conversation of a community.[11]

Nord's observation, however, does not reduce the difficulties inherent in this field of study. For instance, editors act as gatekeepers, selecting which letters to publish; in this way editors can fragment and distort public opinion portrayed in letters to the editor.[12] For example, Time magazine editors say they regularly receive about 50,000 letters to the editor each year from their more than 4 million weekly readers. Time's editors usually publish only 1,000 to 1,500 of those letters annually, or about 3 percent of the total. But in a yearly letter to readers in which the total of all letters to the editor received during the previous year is listed, Time's editors state emphatically that they publish a representative sample of the letters. The editors insist they do not promote any social or political agenda in the letters they print.[13]

---

[9] W. Russell Neuman, Marion R. Just, and Ann N. Crigle, Common Knowledge: News and the Construction of Political Meaning (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[10] Hazel Dicken-Garcia, Journalistic Standards in Nineteenth Century America (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 4.

[11] David Nord, "The Nature of Historical Research," in Research Methods in Mass Communication eds. Guido Stempel and Bruce Westley (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1989), 290.

[12] Despite the potential for abuse of power in selecting letters to the editor, when most newspaper editors are surveyed they claim to promote a wide diversity of views and to see letter columns as "a democratic exercise, balanced fairly in content and access," according to Ray DeLong, "Readers Views Serve Two Purposes," The Masthead 28 (Fall 1976), 10. Also see Leo Bogart, Press and Public: Who Reads What, When, Where and Why (Hilldale, New York: Erlbaum, 1982), 230-34. Most reputable magazine editors express the same sentiments.

A further criticism of the study of letters to the editors is that editors routinely censor letters critical of journalism. And thus, some critics argue, a historical study of printed letters to discover what was said about journalism is of limited value because letters about journalism may have been deleted by overly sensitive editors.

However, such a deliberate suppression of the public conversation of letters to the editor seems unlikely. In the first place, such censorship would require a deception of gigantic proportions, involving rival editors from diverse political viewpoints. The various editors of the 10 independent magazines examined in this study, ranging from the tiny leftist Progressive, with a monthly circulation of about 40,000, to Time, with weekly sales of more than 4 million copies, would all have to agree to keep the number of letters to the editor about journalism down over a period of more than 30 years. And if such a conspiracy were uncovered it could shatter public confidence in these publications. Stacking the deck in letters to the editor to squelch press criticism may seem like a mild form of deception. But any amount of trickery is seen by many press critics as being equivalent to being "a little bit pregnant" - a little is all it takes.

In sum, editors are gatekeepers. But it is unlikely that even acting in this role, aggressively competitive editors from 10 different publications would ban letters to the editor about journalism over a 30-year-period - especially letters that might criticize rival publications or praise a magazine's staff for doing a good job. Media scholars Hal Davis and Galen Rarick argue that newspaper editors generally do not discriminate against letters that oppose their newspapers' positions or criticize their reporters.[14] And many editors across the country have repeatedly emphasized that same statement, insisting they feel compelled to publish letters critical of the news business. New York Times letters editor Robert Barzlay was quoted in a 1988 article saying "critics make a big deal out of it (bias in letter selection). But there is no deal at all. There is only one person who can manipulate letter selection at the Times and that's me. And I am deadly neutral. I have no mission to protect the Times."[15] The same is likely to be true for most editors of reputable news magazines. A Newsweek reporter, for instance, with 20 years of experience writing for the magazine, said recently it has long been a matter of pride at Newsweek that the editors publish as many letters as possible that attack the magazine: "It was and is like a badge of honor to show how tough we are," the Newsweek veteran said.[16] The same is likely to be true for most editors of other reputable news magazines.

---

[13] For an example of such a letter to the reader, see Time 20 Feb. 1989, 12. In that article Time editors wrote that they received 51,000 letters in 1988 and get that many, or more, every year. The editors also repeated that their letter selection process is unbiased.

[14] Hal Davis and Galen Rarick, "Functions of Editorials and Letters to the Editor," Journalism Quarterly 41 (Winter 1964), 108-09.

But even if all letters to the editor in all magazines have been manipulated by editors, they still represent what readers saw in print. This is significant for this reason: Simply by being published in a magazine's pages the letters to the editor helped set the agenda for public discussion.[17]

Nord describes letters to the editor as useful historical texts, despite their shortcomings, because they reveal some readers speaking directly to - and often shouting at - editors. Unlike other magazine readers who remain silent, those whose letters to the editor were published at least left a permanent and public account of their opinions of journalistic standards of the time. Nord argues that a historical examination of letters to the editor can give us what we may need most to construct a history of readership; that is, a glimpse into the past of some actual readers reacting to content.[18]

Nord is not alone in this observation. Mark Popovich and others have called for more study about how magazine readers respond to content. Popovich writes that there is little study of the "strength of the relationship readers may have with magazines"; and "Without that kind of information we have a poor perspective on the role magazines play in our society today."[19] Another magazine historian, Lee Jolliffe, observes there is a scarcity of research into audience reaction to magazine content. Jolliffe asserts that studies of magazine audiences are needed to "show the exchange of influences between the editor, the magazine text, the audience and society."[20]

---

[15] Ralph Nader and Steven Gold, "Letters to the Editor: How About a Little Down-Home Glasnost?" Columbia Journalism Review (September/October 1988), 55.

[16] Personal interview with former Newsweek reporter Virginia "Ginny" H. Carroll, at the Western Journalism Historians Conference, Feb. 28, 1998, in Berkeley, California.

[17] Numerous studies have looked at the agenda-setting process, starting with Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1972, 176-187. McCombs and Shaw have updated their work, along with co-author David Weaver, in Communication and Democracy: Exploring the Intellectual Frontiers in Agenda-Setting Theory (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997.) Another particularly relevant discussion of agenda-setting was written by Michael Bruce MacKuen, "Social Communication and the Mass Policy Agenda," in Michael Bruce MacKuen and Steven Lane Coombs, More Than News: Media Power in Public Affairs (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1981) 17-44.

[18] David Nord, "Reading the Newspaper, Strategies and Politics of Reader Response, Chicago 1912-1917," Journal of Communication, 45 (3), 1995, 67.

[19] Mark Popovich, "Research Review: Quantitative Magazine Studies, 1983-1993," The American Magazine: Research Perspectives and Prospects (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1995), 32.

Looking at letters to the editors in magazines and comparing the themes and numbers from different points in time can be a step toward the depth of research Nord, Jolliffe, and Popovich call for. Moreover, such a study can help researchers understand more about magazine readers and how those readers relate to different publications - and how that relationship may have changed over a period of years. The letter writers were and remain a literate, opinionated, and highly visible portion of the population. Published letters to the editor offer a significant view into a limited but influential world. One researcher described letters to the editor as "more than a hot readership item . . . and more than an access mechanism. It's a regional institution, combining some of the elements of the town meeting, the rural party line, the loafers' bench on the courthouse square and the continuing referendum."[21]

Why Consider 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992?

The time periods were initially selected for this study for several reasons. First, 1972 was chosen because it was the year the Watergate scandal began to unfold after five men were arrested June 17 for breaking into the Democratic national headquarters in Washington, D.C. Soon after that the role of the press in uncovering possible presidential wrongdoing began to be discussed all across the country. Was the press out to get the president? Were journalists reporting the news or creating it? Was all this talk of corruption just the work of some biased muckrakers? It was almost impossible to avoid these kinds of public debates during this presidential election year. As a result it seems a fertile time for people to have written letters to the editor and discussed journalism.

But to put 1972 findings in perspective it seemed logical to compare letters from 10 years before that - that is 1962 - to see if 1972 represented an anomaly in public letter writing about journalism. Some historians and politicians suggest the public was less skeptical of the press in the '60s; a good way to test this hypothesis was to look at how many letters were published about the press in 1962 and what those letters said.

Letters to the editor printed in 1982 were then selected for comparison - to offer the perspective of a decade removed from the passion of Watergate. Would letters to the editor still reflect as much heat and emotion about the press and its journalistic standards eight years after Richard Nixon had finally been forced out of office? The study set out to answer this question by looking at a year that also saw interest soar in journalistic ethics, both in academia and in the larger society. Many new books on the topic of journalistic ethics were printed during this time. Furthermore, many new college courses on the topic of journalistic ethics were added to the curriculum, and centers dedicated entirely to the study of media ethics were established.[22] In addition, the press was still at the center of controversy in 1982, as always - this time with people complaining that the press was contributing to the worst recession in 40 years with sloppy and sensationalistic doom and gloom economic reporting. As a result, studying letters to the editor from 1982 seemed particularly attractive: Was all the talk about media ethics by professionals reflected in letters from consumers of news - the ordinary readers?[23]

---

[20] Lee Jolliffe, "Research Review: Magazine Editors and Editing Practices," The American Magazine, 64.

[21] J. Clemon, "In Defense of Initials," The Masthead 28, 1976, 17.

Finally 1992 was selected for study as another 10-year benchmark period simply because it was once again a presidential election year. The press was once more involved in covering another scandal involving a presidential candidate - this time the Democratic contender, accused of having an adulterous affair. Journalistic ethics once again came to the forefront in this matter as many people wondered how intently - and to what extent - the press should cover the personal lives of politicians.

Previous Research

There is a small but steadily growing body of material surrounding the historical study of letters to the editor. Thematically the research about letters to the editor can be largely divided into three categories: 1) The hazards of trying to ascertain public opinion with certainty through letters to the editor; 2) Conjecture about who writes letters; and 3) Discussion of why people feel compelled to write letters to the editor.

---

[22] Some prominent authors who published journalism ethics books in the early 1980s include: Lee Thayer, Ethics, Morality and the Media (New York, Hastings House, 1980); Eugene Goodwin, Groping for Ethics in Journalism (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1983); and Frank McCulloch, ed., Drawing the Line (Washington, D.C.: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1984). Two major continuing workshops on media ethics were also established with cooperative journalism industry-academic funding during this time as well: The AEJMC/Gannett/University of Missouri Ethics Workshop and the Poynter Institute for Media Studies Teaching Fellowship in Ethics. In addition, the Society of Professional Journalists began to sponsor local media ethics workshops all across the country during this time period.

[23] Several studies have maintained that letters to the editor identify public issues and concerns. See, for example, Ernest C. Hynds, "Editorial Pages are Taking Stands, Providing Forums," Journalism Quarterly 53 (Autumn 1976), 532-35; also see E. Hynds, "Editorial Page Editors Discuss Use of Letters," Newspaper Research Journal (Winter-Spring 1992), 124-136. See also Leila Sussmann, "Mass Political Letter Writing in America: The Growth of an Institution," Public Opinion Quarterly 23 (Summer 1959), 207; Diane Cole, "Letters to the Editor: Who Needs 'em? We Do," The Masthead 44 (Fall 1992), 7; and Tamara Anne Bell, "Using Letters to Assess Public Opinion," (Master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1993).

Category one, public opinion: Schulyer Foster Jr. writes that most letters to the editor are negative or against something or somebody, be it war, the New Deal or gambling. As a result, Foster argues that such negative letters can't accurately measure public opinion.[24] In keeping with that argument, James Cockrum asserts that letters nearly always react to stories covered but rarely initiate discussion of new issues; this adds to the unreliability of letters as a measure of public opinion.[25] That unreliability is also explored by David L. Grey and Trevor Brown, who argue that published letters in presidential elections are more likely measures of the gatekeepers' politics rather than the views of the electorate.[26]

Category two, writer identity: William D. Tarrant, who studied Eugene (Oregon) Register-Guard letter writers, hypothesizes that regular writers are wealthier, better educated, less mobile and more religious than average citizens.[27] Also exploring the identity of letter writers, Sidney Forsythe's 1950 study found the average age of those who write letters to the editor was 59; he concludes that most letter writers are white, male, at least third- or fourth-generation Americans, with above-average education, holding down white-collar jobs.[28] In contrast, Gary Vacin found in a 1965 study that letter writers come from a wide range of occupations.[29] In a further examination of letter writers, Emmett Buell argues that the writers are too often dismissed as kooks, but in reality are not significantly different from the general population;[30] however, David Hill describes letter writers as mostly Republican, conservative and negative. Despite his disclaimer about the bias of most letter writers, Hill uses letters as a way to measure public sentiment about the Equal Rights Amendment.[31]

---

[24] H. Schuyler Foster, Jr., and Carl J. Friedrich, "Letters to the Editor as a Means of Measuring the Effectiveness of Propaganda," American Political Science Review 31 (February 1937), 71-79.

[25] James Luther Cockrum, "A Study of Letters to the Editor Contributed to the Dallas Morning News" (Master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1955), 52.

[26] David L. Grey and Trevor R. Brown, "Letters to the Editor: Hazy Reflections of Public Opinion," Journalism Quarterly 47 (Autumn 1970), 450-56, 471. Grey and Brown were supported in this assertion by a later study by Paula Cozort Renfro, "Bias in Selection of Letters to the Editor," Journalism Quarterly 56 (Winter 1979), 822-26.

[27] William D. Tarrant, "Who Writes Letters to the Editor?" Journalism Quarterly 34 (Fall 1957), 501-502.

[28] Sidney A. Forsythe, "An Exploratory Study of Letters to the Editor and Their Contributors," Public Opinion Quarterly 14 (Spring 1950), 143-44.

[29] Gary L. Vacin, "A Study of Letter-Writers," Journalism Quarterly 42 (Summer 1965), 502.

[30] Emmett Buell, Jr., "Eccentrics or Gladiators? People Who Write About Politics in Letters to the Editor," Social Science Quarterly 56 (December 1975), 440-49.

Category three, reasons for writing: In their examination of why people write letters to the editor, Hal Davis and Galen Rarick argue that one of the main functions of letters to the editor is to give the irate, infuriated and irritated a place to vent.[32] A 1966 study of published letter-writers in Michigan, undertaken by John Klempner, offered nine reasons why people write letters to the editor: 1.To make someone see the light; 2.To promote one's self; 3.To right a wrong; 4. Having been asked; 5. Enjoyment of writing; 6. Feeling one had to write; 7. A sense of public duty; 8. To increase self-esteem; and 9. For therapeutic benefits.[33] In keeping with this finding, Byron Lander argues that letters to the editor function as a safety valve, allowing readers a "catharsis to blow off steam in an unreasoned and emotional way."[34] Further, additional news coverage of certain events can prompt letters, as Steve Pasternak and Suraj Kapoor assert in a 1980 article. The authors write that there was a "dramatic increase" in letters to the editor in the 1970s because of increased coverage of "letter generating topics" such as abortion, Watergate, gun control and the Vietnam war.[35] David Pritchard and Dan Berkowitz, in a 1991 article, using a random selection of 10 newspapers, tested the hypothesis that attention to crime in letters to the editor influences subsequent front-page coverage of crime.[36]

These authors, however, have not attempted to systematically track letters to the editor in selected news magazines over a 30-year period as a way to gauge some of the history of public discussion of journalism.

Methodology

The magazines examined in this research were: Atlantic; Forbes; Harper's; Life; The Nation; New Republic; Newsweek; The Progressive; Time; and U.S. News and World Report. (The magazine selection process will be explained shortly.) All letters to the editor published in these 10 popular news magazines in 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992 - a total of

---

[31] David B. Hill, "Letter Opinion on ERA," Public Opinion Quarterly 45 (Fall 1981), 384-92.

[32] Hal Davis and Galen Rarick, "Functions of Editorials and Letters to the Editor," Journalism Quarterly 41 (Winter 1964), 108-09.

[33] John Andrew Klempner, "People Who Write In: Communication Aspects of Opinion Letter Writing," (Ph.D dissertation, Michigan State University, 1966).

[34] Byron G. Lander, "Functions of Letters to the Editor -- A Re-Examination," Journalism Quarterly 49 (Spring 1972), 142.

[35] Steve Pasternak and Suraj Kapoor, "The Letters Boom," The Masthead 28 (Fall 1976), 17.

[36] David Pritchard and Dan Berkowitz, "How Readers' Letters May Influence Editors and News Emphasis: A Content Analysis of 10 Newspapers, 1948-1978," Journalism Quarterly 68 (Fall 1991), 388-395.

15,024 letters - were examined. Any letters that discussed journalism - a total of 3,689 - were then analyzed in more depth.

To be labeled as a letter about journalism, a letter simply needed to discuss what a writer thought was good or bad reporting or complain or praise the news media in some way. For example, a letter that said "We have to look at mass media as an instrument to stir and provoke society,"[37] was considered a letter about journalistic standards. Or if a letter suggested that, for example, "your magazine is participating in the despicable practice of our modern press community, first to build up a man to celebrity proportions and then to dump him with complete disregard for truth,"[38] that too, was considered a letter about journalistic standards. To put it simply, if a letter mentioned the news media in any way, positive or negative, it was considered part of the discussion of journalism.[39] As a test of coder reliability, all the 1962 letters were double-coded by two separate researchers to determine if the letters were about journalism. The results were then compared and coders agreed on all but three letters - these three letters were then dropped from the study.[40]

How The Magazines Were Chosen For Study

The 10 magazines studied here represent a cross-section of the magazine field, ranging from the conservative business publication, Forbes, to the left-wing Nation. As a result, mainstream magazines with large circulations, such as Time and Newsweek, which each week sell 4 million and 3 million copies, respectively, were studied. Then for a different perspective, considerably smaller and more specialized publications such as The Progressive, which sells only 40,000 copies a month, and The Nation, which sells roughly 80,000 copies a month, were also examined. More information about each magazine and how it was selected is explained in the accompanying footnote.[41]

---

[37] Michael Schaffer, Lake Bluff, Illinois, U.S. News & World Report, 27 Jan. 1992, 8.

[38] Norma K. Turner, Waterviolet, Mich., Atlantic February 1982, 5.

[39] This study of letters followed standard historical methods of analysis of documents. Similar to David Thelen's work in Becoming Citizens in the Age of Television, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), this research was not intended to be used to perform extremely sophisticated correlations and relationships among the letters. Instead it simply involved counting letters about journalism. This counting was closer to the historian's method of accumulating examples than complicated and detailed scientific coding.

[40] Limited funds were available to hire a second coder for only a portion of this research, so 1962 letters were randomly chosen for double-coding as a sample test of the reliability of the coding process. The second coder was initially told to use his own judgment and decide if a letter seemed to be about journalism, or simply a general comment on a subject.

[41] The magazines were chosen for their diverse political slants and varying circulation figures. The intent was to gather magazines from the left, right, and middle of the road and to mix large circulation publications with more esoteric, small magazines. Specifically, the selection was done this way: Atlantic, with a circulation of 464,709, as of 1992, has a

Once the letters about journalism were collected, every letter was analyzed to determine its theme. Roughly 10 thematic categories emerged as readers "constructed" journalism in their remarks, describing in their own words the various functions they thought the press should serve. Thus these categories were derived from the readers' comments. The categories include truth telling, objectivity, fairness, public service, moral force, sensationalism, free press, trust, political non-partisanship, and privacy.[42] Each letter to the editor could be and often was coded more than once if it discussed more than one journalistic theme.[43] Once more, coder reliability was tested here by having two

---

heavy literary tradition and appeals to the up-scale intelligentsia, a group that seemed likely to be willing and able to write letters to the editor; Forbes, with a 1992 circulation of 777,353 and a Wall Street focus, is considered right-wing, conservative, and was studied to balance the views of more liberal magazines; Harper's, 1992 circulation 218,219, is a literary and arts publication with liberal, wealthy readers, who are articulate and also likely to feel comfortable writing letters to the editor; Life, with 1.5 million subscribers as of 1992, is a general interest publication that emphasizes capturing a wide range of readers from various ends of the political spectrum; The Nation, with 82,788 subscribers in 1992, is a narrowly tailored, left-wing publication with more radical readers; The New Republic, circulation 98,252, was once considered liberal, then transformed itself in the 1980s into a "new Right" publication, but was studied here because of its extensive political reporting; Newsweek, with a 1992 circulation of 3.1 million, is one of the 20 best-selling magazines each year and is aimed at a non-political, general audience of nearly all ages and interests; The Progressive, circulation 40,000, a left-leaning publication, was added to balance some views of the more conservative publications; Time, circulation 4 million, is a highly commercial mainstream magazine, usually ranked each year as one of the 10 best selling magazines in the country. Its readers tend to be middle of the road, politically. Thus it was considered a good place to try to sample "average" reader discussion of journalism; and finally, U. S. News & World Report, with 2.2 million subscribers, is geared to older, conservative, middle-class readers. All the circulation records come from 1992 Audit Bureau of Circulation reports.

[42] The spirit of the coding that took place here was more in keeping with qualitative, social science methodology than quantitative, physical science methods. Both the categories and coding were driven by the readers' own words. For example, many letter writers repeatedly discussed the word "truth," when commenting on journalism - so that was one of the first categories initially established. Then the concept of "objectivity" began to occur frequently in letters, along with public service, moral force, and so on. The study started with an examination of 1972 letters so most categories originally emerged in that group. Letters from subsequent time frames contained similar discussions and were gradually added to the count. At all times the researcher was open to new categories, however, and gradually 10 categories were created to accommodate journalistic standards mentioned by readers. When a second coder was employed, the categories were explained to him; that is, the second coder was told that if a letter discussed or mentioned the word truth in connection with journalism, for example, then that letter could be labelled a letter about truth-telling. There was no overriding theory driving the categories - if letters repeatedly mentioned some standard for judging what was good or bad journalism, such as sensationalism, or fairness, then that concept was added to the categories.

[43] Despite a successful limited test of the 1962 classification of the letters with a second coder, nevertheless readers are warned that the categorization of 3,689 letters to the

people code the themes of the 1962 letters - and they agreed on the themes of all but 37 letters. These contested letters were then left out of this study.

Findings: Dwindling Letters about Journalism

In 1962 the 10 magazines published a total of 3,661 letters to the editor - and 2,445, or 66 percent, commented on journalism. (See Table 1). In 1972, journalism was discussed in 954 letters out of 3,727 - or 25 percent of the published letters. In comparison, in 1982 the 10 magazines printed a total of 176 letters to the editor about journalism - out of a total of 3,943 published letters. That means journalism was discussed in only 4 percent of all the letters published that year. Finally, in 1992, journalism was the subject of 115 letters out of a total of 3,693 published letters to the editor - roughly 3 percent of the total. This means that within 30 years the number of published letters to the editor discussing journalistic standards in the 10 news magazines decreased by more than 95 percent (declining from 66 percent to 3 percent).

Table 1.-Letters about journalism, by magazine.

	1962	1972	1982	1992
Atlantic	99	41	8	2
Forbes	172	45	1	1
Harper's	158	37	62	1
Life	673	233	2	2
Nation	161	41	29	17
New Republic	109	38	20	15
Newsweek	353	294	15	41
Progressive	118	42	24	1
Time	602	183	9	19
U.S News	0	0	6	16
Totals	**2,445**	**954**	**176**	**115**

Tables 2 through 5 clarify how the magazines varied in the number and percentage of letters they printed about journalism in 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992. For instance, looking at Table 2, it can be seen that Life magazine published 673 letters to the editor about journalism in 1962, the highest number of letters on the topic among all 10 magazines that year. In total, Life printed 921 letters to the editor in 1962. That means journalism was the focus of 73 percent of all the published letters in Life that year. In comparison, in 1962, Atlantic magazine printed 93 percent, or 99 letters about journalism, out of a total of 106 published letters. Then in 1972 the decrease in published letters about

---

editor was inevitably a matter of some subjective interpretation. Like a Rorschach test, subsequent researchers can and could find different categories appropriate for the same letters.

journalism began. Newsweek printed 294 letters about journalism that year, or 35 percent of a total of 824 published letters. That was the most journalism related letters printed in all 10 magazines in 1972. Only Life came close with 233 letters about journalism. The downward trend in journalism letters continued in 1982 when Harper's printed the highest number of letters about journalism, 62 letters out of 120 published letters to the editor. It should be noted that U.S. News & World Report, which began publication in 1933, did not start printing any letters to the editor until 1977. In 1992 the Nation and Time ran the highest number of journalism letters among all 10 magazines - a mere 17 letters each.

Table 2.-Total letters & percent related to journalism, **1962**.

1962	all letters	letters about journalism	% related to journalism
Atlantic	106	99	93%
Forbes	222	172	77%
Harper's	158	136	86%
Life	921	673	73%
Nation	239	161	67%
New Republic	143	109	76%
Newsweek	600	353	59%
Progressive	162	118	73%
Time	1,110	602	54%
U.S. News	0	0	0
Totals	**3,661**	**2,445**	**66 %**

Table 3.-Total letters & percent related to journalism, **1972**.

1972	all letters	letters about journalism	% related to journalism
Atlantic	123	42	34 %
Forbes	212	45	21 %
Harper's	93	37	39 %
Life	1,024	233	23 %
Nation	119	41	34 %
New Republic	89	38	42 %
Newsweek	820	294	35 %
Progressive	142	42	29 %
Time	1, 105	183	16 %
U.S. News	0	0	0
Totals	**3,727**	**954**	**25 %**

Table 4.-Total letters & percent related to journalism, **1982**.

1982	all letters	letters about journalism	% related to journalism
Atlantic	130	8	6 %
Forbes	308	1	.3 %
Harper's	120	62	51 %
Life	205	2	.9 %
Nation	184	29	15 %
New Republic	244	20	8 %
Newsweek	668	15	2 %
Progressive	168	24	14 %
Time	1, 080	9	.8 %
U.S. News	836	6	.7 %
Totals	**3,943**	**176**	**4 %**

Table 5.-Total letters & percent related to journalism, **1992**.

1992	all letters	letters about journalism	% related to journalism
Atlantic	180	2	.01 %
Forbes	287	1	.3 %
Harper's	84	1	1.1 %
Life	126	2	1.5 %
Nation	227	17	7.4 %
New Republic	376	15	3.9 %
Newsweek	784	41	5.2 %
Progressive	169	2	1.1 %
Time	907	17	1.8 %
U.S. News	553	16	2.8 %
Totals	**3,693**	**114**	**3 %**

Findings: Themes

Just as the number of letters to the editor about journalism varied over the decades, so too did the leading themes reflected in the letters. Table 6 shows, public service was the most frequently expressed theme of published letters to the editor about journalism in 1962 - mentioned in 52 percent of the 1962 letters, or 1,295 letters out of 2,445 letters.

In contrast with this public service theme, objectivity was the most common theme of 1992 letters - the focus of 35 percent of the printed letters that discussed journalism, or 40 out of 114 letters. A more detailed explanation of the themes of the journalism letters - as these themes were suggested by the letters themselves - follows below.

Table 6-Themes, numbers & percent, 1962

Themes **1962**	Themes - 2,445 journalism letters	theme % - 2,445 journalism letters
Truth	810 letters	33 %
Objectivity	288 letters	11 %
Fairness	456 letters	18 %
Public Service	**1,295 letters**	**52 %**
Moral Force	58 letters	2 %
Sensationalism	14 letters	.5 %
Free Press	9 letters	.3 %
Trust	5 letters	.2
Political Partisanship	13 letters	.5 %
Privacy	0	0

(Note that one letter can and often did contain more than one theme. As a result the theme percentages often exceed 100 percent.)

Table 7-Themes, numbers & percent, 1972

Themes **1972**	themes - 954 journalism letters	theme % of 954 journalism letters
Truth	**294 letters**	**30.8 %**
Objectivity	122 letters	12.7 %
Fairness	66 letters	6.9 %
Public Service	**388 letters**	**40.6 %**
Moral Force	89 letters	9.3 %
Sensationalism	17 letters	.02 %
Free Press	5 letters	.01 %
Trust	0	0
Political Partisanship	2 letters	.08 %
Privacy	0	0

Table 8-Themes, numbers and percentages, 1982

Themes 1982	themes - 176 journalism letters	theme % - 176 journalism letters
Truth	**56 letters**	**31%**
Objectivity	27 letters	15%
Fairness	26 letters	14%
Public Service	31 letters	17%
Moral Force	15 letters	8.5%
Sensationalism	13 letters	7.3%
Free Press	2 letters	.01%
Trust	13 letters	7.3%
Political Partisanship	1 letter	.01%
Privacy	0	

Table 9-Themes, numbers and percentages, 1992

Themes 1992	themes - 114 journalism letters	theme % - 114 journalism letters
Truth	25 letters	21%
Objectivity	**40 letters**	**35%**
Fairness	22 letters	19%
Public Service	22 letters	19%
Moral Force	7 letters	5.2%
Sensationalism	10 letters	9 %
Free Press	1 letters	.01 %
Trust	6 letters	5%
Political Partisanship	5 letters	4%
Privacy	1 letter	.01%

Table 10.-Themes in letters to editor about journalism, by magazine, **1962.**

1962	Truth	Objectivity	Fairness	Public Service	Moral Force	Sensationalism	Free Press	Trust	Political Partisan	Privacy
Atlantic	28	10	10	67	0	2	0	0	0	0
Forbes	97	22	8	57	0	1	0	4	1	0
Harper's	54	27	48	78	6	2	2	0	0	0
Life	164	48	64	445	25	1	0	1	6	0
Nation	91	59	73	74	7	7	3	0	0	0
New Republic	56	33	19	34	0	0	2	0	1	0
Newsweek	123	24	59	192	5	0	2	0	2	0
Progressive	26	13	2	58	11	1	0	0	2	0
Time	171	52	173	290	4	0	0	0	1	0
U.S News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	810	288	456	**1,295**	58	14	9	5	13	0

Table 11.-Themes in letters to editor about journalism, by magazine, **1972.**

1972	Truth	Objectivity	Fairness	Public Service	Moral Force	Sensationalism	Free Press	Trust	Political Partisan	Privacy
Atlantic	20	2	1	13	10					
Forbes	24	3		8	9		1			
Harper's	12	4	3	20	2					
Life	47	21	19	113	28	4	1			
Nation	15	10	3	15					3	
New Republic	29	3	.2	5						
Newsweek	84	28	18	131	22	8	2			
Progressive	11	8		20	3				2	
Time	52	43	20	63	15	5	1		3	
U.S News										
	294	122	66	**388**	89	17	5		8	0

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 12.-Themes in letters to editor about journalism, by magazine, **1982.**

1982	Truth	Objectivity	Fairness	Public Service	Moral Force	Sensationalism	Free Press	Trust	Political Partisan	Privacy
Atlantic	4			1				4		
Forbes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	0
Harper's	17		10	6	4	6		2		
Life	1	1	1							
Nation	12	2	5	8	2	1	1	3		
New Republic	6	1	5	6	2	1		2		
Newsweek	7	7	3	2	2	1				
Progressive	7	12		6	4	3				
Time		4		2	1		1			
U.S News	2		2			1		2		
	56	27	26	31	15	13	2	13	1	0

Table 13-Themes in letters to editor about journalism, by magazine, **1992**.

1992	Truth	Objectivity	Fairness	Public Service	Moral	Sensationalism	Free Press	Trust	Political Partisan	Privacy
Atlantic			1			1				
Forbes				1						
Harper's										1
Life		1	1	1						
Nation	7	3	7	2	2					
New Republic	7	3	3							
Newsweek	5	15	8	2	6	6	1		3	
Progressive	1									
Time	3	8	1		4					
U.S News	2	10	1	1	1	3		6	2	
	25	**40**	22	7	13	10	1	6	5	1

Public Service

Public service was generally defined by letter writers as the willingness of a publication to "instruct, to teach us how to be good citizens and to bring beauty and intelligent reporting into our homes,"[44] as one Life magazine reader wrote in 1962. Public service was further defined as journalistic excellence, provided without fear or favor and without concern for financial gain. When readers came upon stories with depth and perspective, demonstrating extreme accuracy and sparking interest, they often commented on the story's public service.

For example, Martha Poling, of Circleville, Ohio, commended Life in 1962 for serving its readers well and teaching them about the economy. "Millions of words have been written about what is wrong with the economy. Yet in a few memorable lines you were able to pinpoint our major problems and offer workable solutions. It is time the

---

[44] Eugenia Wallace, Valparaiso, Indiana, Life, 15 June 1962, 28.

American people demand more such journalistic honesty and integrity."[45] Gloria Bond of New York City took a similar tone, commending the public service provided by Life magazine through its willingness to print photos by the "Negro" photographer Gordon Parks. "His splendid eye-catching high fashion pictures in color, not only enhanced Life but gave many readers a refreshing lift. The lovely Negro models prove that pulchritude is not possessed exclusively by one race. You have taught us a great lesson in race relations."[46]

Objectivity

Each letter-to-the-editor writer defined objectivity a little differently. But as a group, the letters about objectivity agreed that this ideal called for reporters to purge themselves of prejudices and biases. And in 1992 most letter writers complained that they rarely saw objectivity in practice. A 1992 letter seemed to sum up this point when Nashville letter writer W. Scott Benton wrote that "I am frustrated and concerned that in a time of constant media attacks against everyone and anyone, an unbiased report is rare if not impossible to find."[47] Another 1992 letter said male editors don't understand that "date rape is not an insignificant, foolish issue." But the letter asserted that editors encourage women reporters to write as much. "The lesson: Women journalists can go far if they adopt this attitude in their writing and attack feminism."[48]

Letter writers repeatedly expressed their disappointment over a perceived lack of objectivity on many subjects in 1992, when complaints about objectivity seemed to blossom in nearly every issue of the 10 magazines studied. Here are a few examples: "It is clear you suffer from a male bias. Although I opted for breast implants, I am not a bimbo or a Stepford wife, and I resent your name-calling. With these erroneous and cruel labels you deny the essence of femininity, compassion, understanding and the capacity to nurture."[49] That is what Ann Grossman of Yardley, Pennsylvania, wrote in a 1992 letter to Newsweek. Robert Gonsalves of Crockett, California, wrote that Newsweek starts with a premise and then proceeds to prove it, without studying the facts objectively: "I'm getting tired of Newsweek's unprofessional preemptive strike against any conspiracy theorists. You dissuade people from investigating the evidence and thinking for themselves."[50]

---

[45] Martha Poling, Circleville, Ohio, Life, 29 June 1962, 15.

[46] Gloria Bond, New York City, Life, 20 July 1962, 21.

[47] W. Scott Benton, Nashville, Tennessee, Life, November 1992, 22.

[48] Joanne Jacobs, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Nation, 20 April 1992, 506.

[49] Ann H. Grossman, Yardley, Pennsylvania, Newsweek, 10 Feb. 1992, 14.

[50] Robert Gonsalves, Crockett, California, Newsweek 13 Jan. 1992, 12.

In addition to the previously discussed themes of public service and objectivity - the number one themes in 1962 and 1992, respectively - a total of eight other themes emerged from the letters. In the interest of brevity, three of the most significant themes - truth telling, fairness and moral force - are discussed in more detail below.

Truth Telling

Truth-telling letters were straightforward in their complaints about the press. An example of this clear-cut discussion is a 1982 letter in the Progressive that said: "Your December cover story on garbage was strewn with half-truths, marvelously misleading statements, and soft-headed analysis. It is the silliest story on resource recovery that I have seen in my five years working in resource recovery. Let me try to straighten things out."[51] A letter in Atlantic magazine in 1972 asserted simply that a reporter for the magazine had trouble grasping basic facts - this time, geography. "Has your Mr. Manning changed the course of the Potomac? Or has he simply neglected to look at a map? He writes ('In the City of Power,' December, 1971) that: 'the fetid section of Virginia that George Washington chose as the cite for the Federal City of the new republic is today a somewhat cosmopolitan and, in places, beautiful city.' He obviously refers to Washington. But what is now the District of Columbia was never part of Virginia; in colonial times it was in Maryland."[52]

Fairness

Fairness was defined broadly by letter writers as a willingness to print many points of view about a given issue. A New Republic reader put the discussion of fairness this way in a 1992 letter, saying the magazine "takes the cake for publishing one of the most outright blasphemous, racist and unfair articles to date . . . If you ever bother to balance your articles with what some of the rest of us have to say . . . for once you'll be honest journalists."[53] Bruce Joyce of Columbia University put the discussion of fairness this way in a 1972 letter to Harper's: "That you permitted the publication of an unabashed selection of wholly negative evidence [about the effects of early education] is totally unfair and hard to understand."[54] Joyce's comments seemed to be echoed some 10 years later in a letter in the same magazine by William Brady, of Little Rock, Arkansas who said "I am utterly and frankly amazed that your magazine, any respectable magazine, would actually print such an unfair piece of work. One might expect such one-sided treatment from the National Enquirer or the like. But readers of Harper's deserve better."[55]

---

[51] Chaz Miller, Washington, D.C., The Progressive March 1982, 6.

[52] Robert McClenon, Gaithersburg, Maryland Atlantic, February 1972, 39.

[53] John McCaslin, Washington, D.C., The New Republic 16 March 1992, 5.

[54] Bruce R. Joyce, Columbia University, New York, Harper's September 1972, 6.

Moral Force

The number of letters about the the role of the press as a moral force was never high. But discussion of the topic was lively. Here is an example: "It is unlikely that Time would present a cover story on the latest trend in male physiques as it did with women in 'The New Ideal of Beauty.' By printing such an article Time acts as a moral leader and perpetuates society's ideal that a woman's appearance has a lot to do with her worth as a human being," wrote Ann Kelly, of Manlius, New York.[56]

Irvin Cady, of Alpena, Michigan, wrote in 1972 that Atlantic magazine should consider what moral lessons it was teaching when it printed article that used "vulgar words." The story could have been printed "in a more subtle manner and it would have been just as interesting without the so-called avant-garde phraseology; in other words, just plain smut," Cady wrote.[57]

Discussion/Analysis

In sum, these findings offer strong primary evidence that the most popular themes of printed letters to the editor in the 10 magazines changed from 1962 to 1992, from a concern with public service to a concern with objectivity. Thus in 1962, most letters to the editor about journalism discussed how the magazines were performing a public service by shedding light on a particular problem and educating the public about a situation that needed to be rectified. That same public service theme was still predominant in 1972, but the second most common refrain that year was that reporters couldn't get their facts straight, either as a result of carelessness or reckless indifference. The message about inaccuracies and a lack of truth became the dominant theme of the published letters in 1982. But by 1992 there was a slightly different spin: Letter writers were still angry about inaccuracies, but now 35 percent were saying that because of a variety of built-in biases and prejudices the reporters were incapable of ever discovering or telling the truth: Reporters were male-biased, or too conservative, or not ethnic enough or too anti-religious, readers said - and there was little chance that this lack of objectivity could or would ever change.

In addition to revealing these themes and the fact that they changed over a 30-year period, this research shows that the number of published letters to the editor about journalism in 10 magazines declined substantially from 1962 to 1992 - down from 2,445, or 66 percent of the total, to 115 letters, or 3 percent of the total.[58]

---

[55] William B. Brady, Little Rock, Arkansas, Harper's April 1982, 5.

[56] Ann Kelly, Manlius, New York, Time 20 Sept. 1982, 5.

[57] Irvin H. Cady, Alpena, Michigan, Atlantic, August 1972, 24.

A cynic might dismiss this decrease, saying it merely reflects editors censoring comments about journalism. But an important point to keep in mind is that the research presented here analyzed any letters about journalism - positive or negative. If editors were manipulating letters to the editor for 30 years, they would likely print positive letters and delete negative ones. But the historical record shows no overwhelming flood of positive letters about journalism - and no shortage of negative letters. Instead in 1982 and 1992 there was a mere trickle of any journalism letters at all - 4 percent and 3 percent, respectively. Sometimes the simplest explanation is best - perhaps there are fewer published letters about journalism simply because people are writing fewer letters on the topic.

Some may claim the changing media world can explain the steady decline in letters about journalism: Perhaps in 1962 there were few places to sound off about the media other than letters to the editor pages. By 1992, it could be asserted, those who wished to ventilate about media standards could use the radio and TV. But this assertion loses its strength when one considers the usual broadcast media roles: How many letters to the editor about journalism does Peter Jennings read on World News Tonight? And although Howard Stern and Rush Limbaugh may laughingly ridicule one or two letters from irate listeners per year on their radio shows, this hardly constitutes a satisfying public outlet for media criticism. The fact is that outside of talk radio, which has a limited constituency and appeal, the broadcast media do not offer many consistently available opportunities for public feedback.

Could the Internet account for declining published debate about journalism in magazines? This scenario, suggested by some critics, seems unlikely, given the time period studied here -1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992. In 1962 and 1972 there was no Internet access for the average person. And then between 1982 and 1992 this new medium was still in its infancy. It involved only a fraction of the American population.

A reviewer of an early draft of this research suggested this paper is actually a gatekeeper study revealing only what editors were willing to publish about their own product. So be it. Until now the historical record of published letters in magazines has been unexamined. No one has known what letters published in magazines have said about journalism, and whether the letters have increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past 30 years.

---

[58] One critic of an early draft of this paper requested that the editors of the 10 magazines be questioned to find out how they chose which letters to publish in 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992 and to discover exactly how many letters were not published. This is a daunting task. For example, how many editors from 1962 are still working at the 10 magazines? And how many unpublished 1962 letters are still available for study? Even if all the editors could be found and somehow interviewed and the reliability of their remarks determined, such work is beyond the scope of this research. The purpose here is to examine the historical record of published letters, not to engage in philosophical debates about how letters are selected.

Another critic has responded to this research by saying that magazines in the 1980s and 1990s prostituted themselves to please advertisers and therefore eliminated critical letters about journalism. It is hard to determine the validity of such a claim. But even if it is true, this paper needs to be widely circulated and discussed - if only as partial evidence that the relationship may have changed in recent years between magazine letter writers and the editors. If the walls have come down at news magazines and advertisers are indirectly causing the elimination of letters about journalism, this possibility needs to debated among journalism scholars - and declining journalism letters may provide a vital clue.

This paper offers a simpler alternative explanation, however: The decrease of published letters discussing the news media in all 10 contemporary magazines over a 30-year period suggests readers may have lost interest in journalism and simply wrote less commentary on the subject. It is easy to simply say no one writes letters anymore. But that assertion does not explain the average of 50,000 letters to the editor received each year at Time magazine.

The evidence from this research into the thematic content of the contemporary letters suggests that many of today's magazine readers write letters to the editor, but on subjects other than the press. And the 3,693 letters to the editor printed in 1992 in the 10 magazines studies strongly support this notion. The total number of published letters in the magazines barely changed from 1962, when 3,661 letters were printed. Perhaps there is a combination of factors at work - readers writing fewer letters on the subject and editors intuitively thinking people don't care about journalism and deciding to publish fewer journalism letters. This, in turn, could cause people to write even fewer letters about a subject they rarely see covered.

Another interesting finding in this research is the disconnect between what reporters think is important for readers to know about and what readers comment about in their letters. This examination into the record of published letters was started with the expectation that many of what the press considered major scandals of 1962, 1972, 1982 and 1992 would be reflected in letters to the editor; that is, letter writers would comment on these topics. For example, Watergate received front-page coverage in 1972. But few letters to the editor commented on the Watergate scandal. Another disconnect: In 1982 the World Almanac listed the year's recession, the worst in 40 years, as one of the major news events. But again, few, if any, letters to the editor commented on it. That same year

Columbia Journalism Review and other journalism publications asked what role, if any, the press played in contributing to 1982 economic problems with perhaps overly pessimistic financial reporting. But published letters to the editor didn't ask these kinds of questions in 1982. Finally in 1992 it seemed clear there would be many letters commenting on press coverage of Bill Clinton's alleged marital infidelities, since the press had covered the issue so extensively. But once again, few published letters to the editor discussed this topic.

Instead, the handful of letters in 1992 that discussed journalism focused on more basic issues - such as whether reporters can step outside their narrow prejudices and biases and report the news in an objective fashion. The letter writing public seemed genuinely unconcerned with President Clinton's alleged paramour, Gennifer Flowers, and whether the press should pursue her into her bedroom. Instead the small cadre of readers interested in journalism questioned reporters' abilities to relate information objectively.

Declining journalism letters may indicate a growing public alienation from the press. This sense of alienation permeates the published letters in 1992. As might be expected, many readers in 1962, 1972 and 1982 expressed anger at the press, especially when reporters couldn't seem to get basic data correct, such as the location of a river or the business track record of a prominent Wall Street investor. But by 1992, quite the opposite attitude is evident in the letters: Readers generally seem detached and mildly disappointed in their letters, expressing the notion that the press didn't get things right, but that nothing more can be expected from biased journalists. This pessimistic, cynical and detached view of the press is a far cry from the criticism one might expect to hear if readers truly believed in journalism and were concerned to find instances of failure. The reader alienation from journalism uncovered in this research may actually be more difficult for journalists to overcome - in much the same way marriage counselors say a marriage is through, not when angry words are spoken, but when there is no longer any talk at all. It is hard to repair a relationship if couples no longer care enough to even bother to try to communicate. The historical record of published magazine letters to the editor from 1992 indicate readers may have cared little about journalism. As a result, if this trend is continuing, the marriage between journalists and readers may be perilously close to ending.

Conclusion

Further research should seek to explore the meaning of the decline in journalistic discussion in magazine letters to the editor in more detail and move toward definitive explanations.

Nord says more audience studies are needed. "We don't need more philosophy, not more theory about audience activity or passivity," he writes, "but rather more empirical research, research that links actual readers with texts and historical and social contexts."[59]

This research argues for the historical importance of letters to the editor. The absence of material in journalism history books on letters to the editor and what they reflect about journalism is an oversight begging for correction. Inclusion of such material in journalism history could add to the continuing debate over journalistic standards and the role of the press. For too long letters to the editor have been the elephant in the parlor that everyone ignores: It is time to look at the elephant and see the creature for what it is, a historical text - and not be obsessed only with how it wound up in the parlor.

In the process of looking at the historical record of letters to the editor, this research may contribute to a deeper understanding of audience reaction to journalism in the past. Such knowledge can contribute to a greater awareness of how the reader-magazine relationship has changed over time. Rather than relying on secondary sources and assumptions about what magazine readers have said about journalism in history, researchers need to find the voice of the public, some of it expressed in letters to the editor, and include that in journalism's historical record.

---

[59] Nord, "Reading the Newspaper," Journal of Communication, 67, 88.

The *Astounding* Women of *Analog*: A Content Analysis of Cover Art, 1930 - 1995.

Lisa M Daigle
Graduate Student
Georgia State University
Atlanta, Georgia
email: lvarisco@earthlink.net

Presented to the Magazine Division
AEJMC Annual Convention
Baltimore, August, 1998

The Astounding Women of Analog Magazine: A Content Analysis of Cover Art

Abstract

This study is a content analysis of science fiction magazine cover art. It is designed to find out if specific types of cover art, namely those with images of women, exist and if certain images are reoccurring. It also seeks to find out if certain female images have changed over time.

Its focus is on *Analog* magazine and its history of cover art from 1930 to 1995.

The Astounding Women of Analog Magazine: A Content Analysis of Cover Art

Table of Contents

I What is Science Fiction?

II Popularity Brings Importance

III The Art of the Cover Image

IV The *Astounding* Life-Span of *Analog* Magazine

V Methodology

VI Results

VII Discussion

VIII Appendix 1: *Astounding Magazine's* first Editorial (January, 1930)

IX Appendix 2: Graph I (Representation); Graph II (Body Representation)

X Appendix 3: Graph III (Dominance); Graph IV (Year)

XI Bibliography

The Astounding Women of Analog Magazine: A Content Analysis of Cover Art

"Most publishers know that it is the cover that sells the magazine....."
— Marshal B. Tymn and Mike Ashley
Science Fiction, Fantasy and Weird Fiction Magazines, 1985.

Science fiction is an extremely popular genre in today's society. Movies, such as *Aliens 4: The Resurrection* and *Starship Troopers*, draw consumers to the box office. Bookstores have multiple racks set aside for only science fiction novels. Television programs, such as the *X-Files* and *Millennium*, hold high ratings. Publishing companies enjoy large profits from increasing book sales and new magazines continue to surface. Science fiction, SF, is a growing and pervasive genre. Yet within academic study, this genre has been largely ignored.

A magazine's cover is the first thing a person sees on the sales rack. Therefore a magazine's cover must grab that potential reader's attention and hold it long enough to engage the reader's interest. Images are chosen carefully and are a integral part of a magazine's sale potential (Abrahamson, 1996, Gunn, 1988, Svilpis, 1983, Taft, 1988, Tymn & Ashley, 1985, Woseley, 1973). SF magazine cover art is unique in its use of images. SF cover art, however popular with its readers, has been largely dismissed in both magazine and content analysis studies.

This study is a content analysis of science fiction magazine cover art. It is designed to find out if specific types of cover art, namely those with images of women, exist and if certain images are reoccurring. It also seeks to find out if certain female images have changed over time. Its focus is on *Analog* magazine, its history of cover art from 1930 to 1995.

What Is Science Fiction?

Many critics dispute when SF actually started. Some credit Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* as the first work of science fiction, released in 1818, for it "provides a pattern for asking questions about the new future, for expressing hopes, fears, and speculations in fictional form" (Clute, 1995,

p. 108). Others cite Jules Verne as the founder of SF as a genre, for he published many works in the 1860s (Clute, 1995, Gunn, 1975, Rottenstiener, 1975). Still others credit "pulp magazines" as the official start of the SF genre, for a peak of interest occurred in fans at pulp magazine's start in the late 1920s (Clute, 1995, Gunn, 1975, Rottenstiener, 1975, Sanders, 1994). Whichever year is considered SF's beginning, science fiction has enjoyed popularity for decades. It is, as one author states, "virtually a world-wide phenomenon" (Rottenstiener, 1975, p. 7).

There is even more discrepancy regarding the definition of science fiction than its beginning. Numerous definitions exist of what constitutes "science fiction." As one critic states, "trying to get two enthusiasts to agree on a definition of SF leads to bloody knuckles" (Damon Knight, as cited in Rottenstiener, 1975). Some definitions include:

- Science fiction is a branch of fantasy identifiable by the fact that it eases the 'willing suspension of disbelief' on the part of its readers by utilizing an atmosphere of scientific credibility for its imaginative speculations in physical science, space, time, social science, and philosophy. (Moskowitz, 1966, as cited in Rottenstiener, 1975)
- ...[it] presupposes a technology, or an effect of technology, or a disturbance in the natural order, such as humanity, up to the time of writing, has not in actual fact experienced. (Crispin, 1955, as cited in Rottenstiener, 1975)
- ....that class of prose narrative treating of a situation that could not arise in the world we know, but which is hypothesized on the basis of some innovation in science or technology, or pseudo-technology, whether human or extra-terrestrial in origin. (Amis, 1960, as cited in Rottenstiener, 1975)
- Any story that argues the case for a changed world that has not yet come into being. (Clute, 1995)
- ...a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment, distinguished by the narrative dominance or hegemony of a fictional 'novum' validated by cognitive logic. (Suvin, 1982)
- It is relatively easy...to demonstrate what science fiction is not. It isn't...fiction about science;...it isn't a form of prophecy...above all, science fiction is *positively* not fantasy. (Pohl, 1997)
- ..science fiction is the mythos of industrialized societies...those narratives of a society which are used to explain to the members of that society the nature of the universe, their roles in it, and what limits and values the members are to respect. (Spinks, 1986)

There are also differing opinions on various divisions within the science fiction genre; "hard" science fiction, for example, is thought to be different than more traditional science fiction (Bridgstock, 1983). Hard science fiction is based upon science, specifically scientific fact. One author suggests hard science fiction is "mathematically demonstrable" (Clayton 1986). Despite the differing opinions on what exactly science fiction is as a genre, its popularity thrives. Its variety, and diversity, are a large part of its charm (Zgorzelski, 1979).[1]

Popularity Brings Importance

As the popularity of the SF genre has grown in recent years, there have been peaks and valleys in its notoriety. The 1950s saw a rise in fans, as did the 1980s (Gunn, 1988; Rottenstiener, 1975; Sanders, 1994). The "pulp" magazine phenomenon began in 1926 with the publication of *Amazing Stories* magazine. It was the first pulp magazine devoted entirely to science fiction. It lead the way for scores of pulp magazines, which later met their demise after only a few decades (Clute, 1995, Franklin 1982, Gunn, 1975, Peterson, 1956, Rottenstiener, 1975). Prior to *Amazing Stories*, a few pulp magazines, such as *Argosy*, included SF stories. By 1939, fans of SF had formed their own organization, New Fandom, which held the first SF convention (Peterson, 1956). Since then, the "fandom" of SF has continued to grow. "The delirium continues and, if anything, is intensified..." (Asimov, 1981, p. 244). This fandom's growth supports the expansion of the SF field. SF magazines in particular encourage this fan phenomenon (Trimble, as cited in Sanders, 1994).

Enthusiasts are responsible for most SF consumer purchases. Readers are the key to any magazine's success. (Wolseley, 1973). In order to remain popular and profitable, magazines have moved to targeting audiences. Specialized magazines, which target specific audiences, have seen significant growth since 1965 (Abrahamson, 1996, van Zuilen, 1977).

---

[1] For the purpose of this study, if a magazine called itself science fiction, it was considered as such.

SF magazines today have "displayed tremendous growth in recent years." (Taft, 1982, p. 194). For example, *Analog*, founded in 1930, sells approximately 60,000 copies monthly. *Galileo*, founded in 1979, "is similar" in respect to copies sold. (Taft, 1982) *Fantasy & Science Fiction* has been published for over 30 years. (Taft, 1982, pp. 194-196).[2]

The study of magazines is seen as unique because magazines are not published as often as newspapers, and they reflect changing tastes and interests of different groups within society (Worthington, as cited in Abrahamson, 1995). Magazine research that studies the effects of advertisements are popular, although not as numerous as one might think; for example, over a 20-year period, only six percent of *Journalism Quarterly's* published articles were centered on magazine research (Popovich, as cited in Abrahamson, 1995). Numerous studies have been conducted on the representation of women in advertisements found within magazines. Yet there are more topics that could be covered with regard to magazine content.

The study of science fiction in particular will benefit academic research. Science fiction itself has been said to be significant in that it predicts social and technological change and brings important issues to light (Miles, 1993). "SF is important both as a popular phenomenon and as an intellectual concern" (Theall, 1980, p. 247). Whereas literary criticism of SF has grown, academic research has not grown as quickly (Angenot & Suvin, 1979, Jameson, 1982). Journals such as *Science-Fiction Studies* are devoted to the study of science fiction, yet they have largely concentrated on literary criticism of SF novels, feminist studies of the representation of women within the fiction, and utopian discussions regarding SF and its future predictions (Borgmeier, 1990). Criticism is extending towards SF magazine content (Philmus, 1984). However, much more work is left to be done within this field.

---

[2] This 60-year popularity is why *Analog* was chosen as the focus of this study

The importance of SF as a genre crosses over many different fields of study. SF is being used by other fields, especially business. For example, Laurie Kahn, senior vice-president of Young & Rubicam advertising agency states:

> The public has become so sophisticated about science fiction,...that we can now incorporate it into our marketing strategy, and translate SF concepts into commercial messages which everybody understands. As an advertising tool, science fiction has become a shared experience. (Swires, as cited in Lowentrout, 1987).

Due to its fandom, its popularity, and its pervasive stance in society, SF is a genre worth studying (Lowentrout, 1987).

The Art of the Cover Image

Magazine images, especially advertisements, have been adequately researched (Jones, 1995). Studies have researched not only what types of images are used, but also what effects these images may have on readers (Baumgartner et al, 1997), consumer behavior (Stern, 1996), women (Russ, 1980, Stern, 1993), and gender (Barthel, 1988, Darley & Smith, 1995, Simpson et al, 1996). Other studies have assessed media exposure (Finn, 1997), and the psychology of advertising and emotional response (Richins, 1997). Most studies agree that images in advertisements are effective attention-getters, and that images are effective in grabbing the consumer's response (Swan, 1955).

A number of gender difference studies have addressed the motivation behind the consumer. Darley and Smith (1997) found that males and females interpret images differently. Males are selective information processors, who tend to use heuristics processing and miss subtle cues; females are comprehensive information processors who consider both subjective and objective product attributes and respond to subtle cues. Darley and Smith's study measured consumers, divided by gender, and lends credence to the idea that science fiction consumers may interpret the cover images they see differently, and they may also respond to those covers differently.

Seduction is a key element in images that grab attention (Deithyon & Grayson, 1995). Seduction, or the idea that sex sells, is a common theme in marketing, and some researchers even state that marketing depends "quite pervasively" on seduction (Kapferer, 1985, as cited in Deighton & Grayson, 1995). This seduction grabs the consumer's attention.

One such area that has not been adequately explored is SF magazine cover art. Within the arena of science fiction, its artwork enjoys a large popularity and following. Fans collect artwork, which has created a popular field within itself. A few important studies have been conducted. J. E. Svilpis conducted a semiotic analysis of a few SF magazine covers. However, it was largely devoted to a Freudian interpretation of the inanimate images represented (1983). Another study conducted an analysis of women represented in *Planet Comics*, but did not focus solely on image (Larew, 1997); still another study focused on the image of women on SF magazine covers, but only looked at the image of the female alien (Roberts, 1987). This study also was more concerned with interior images and textual content than strictly cover art.[3]

Although Robin Roberts' (1987) study was not primarily concerned with cover art, it provides an integral piece to this analysis. Roberts claimed that the portrayal of women as aliens, both as literal horrifying characters and as figurative alternate beings, provided women readers with a powerful "legacy." She states that the pulp magazines that used these depictions gave female readers of the era (1950s) an idea of power and strength. Roberts argues that these alien portrayals caused women to enter the realm of SF as writers, thus leaving a "legacy" to future feminists.[4]

Science fiction covers are integral to the popularity and sale of the magazine. "While most magazines can rely simply on the photo of a pretty girl on the cover,....the SF magazine has to achieve much more. Not only must it indicate the contents of the magazine by its cover, but its cover must also present to a potential reader an image of something that does not exist in the world as we know it" (Tymn & Ashley, 1985, preface). The image a SF magazine places on its cover not only speaks of the magazine, but also the opinion the magazine has of its readers and what it believes will sell the magazine (Gunn, 1988). "The SF painting is unique among other forms of commercial illustration in that it is not often subject to stylistic trends or linked to specific historical periods that would tend to date it" (p. 231).

---

[3] These three articles sparked the interest in this study.

[4] Robin Roberts. A New Species: Gender & Science in Science Fiction. "Chapter 2: The Female Alien: Pulp Science Fiction's Legacy to Feminists." University of Illinois Press: 1993. pp. 40 - 65.

The SF magazine image is complex, fantastical, and detailed. Images are integral to the magazine, and significant entities themselves. Yet these images have been virtually ignored in research. For example, one scholar notes:

> When critics compile lists of 'definitions of science fiction,' they invariably consider only verbal definitions;...while pictorial representations can never match the clarity and subtlety of verbal definitions, they still can be regarded as a potentially valid alternative approach to the problem of definition and might be usefully examined both for information about the attitudes towards science fiction of the people who created and used them and as possible influences on the attitudes of those people who regularly saw them (Westfahl, 1995).

The types of SF images found on magazine covers are numerous. However, they do follow certain themes (Frewin, 1975). They represent stories found within the magazine's pages. They also reflect social attitudes and perceptions of women during specific eras (Larew, 1997). Some images have been criticized as only reflecting "women as seen by men" (Lefanu, 1988, p. 14). One study states that SF "has a long-standing and well-developed tradition of powerful female aliens" represented through cover art, and that since most SF was written by men, "the genre reflected the larger culture's treatment of woman as alien" (Roberts, 1987, p. 34). A larger analysis of the specific types of images magazines have used would benefit academic research.

This study does not seek to establish any negative affects these utilized images may or may not have on consumers, nor does it propose that certain images directly cause greater sales. The focus is on the images of women as an entity themselves. Many have studied the effects of magazine covers, but adequate studies have not been accomplished regarding SF cover art.

The *Astounding* Life-span of *Analog* Magazine

Analog has been a popular magazine since 1930.[5] Not many magazines can boast a 60 year life-span, especially not in the science fiction field. A 60 year life-span makes *Analog* one of the longest running science fiction magazines in American history.

Analog magazine first began as *Astounding Stories of Super-Science* in 1930. It became simply *Astounding Stories* in 1931. In 1938, editor John W Campbell, Jr. changed its name to *Astounding Science Fiction* and then to *Analog Science Fiction — Science Fact* in 1960. Despite these changes in name, *Analog* retained popularity among its fans.

The first editor, Harry Bates, is credited with starting 1930 off "right."[6] Bates promised his readers stories that "will not only be strictly accurate in their science but will be vividly, dramatically and thrillingly told."[7] The magazine enjoyed popularity, even though pulp magazines were looked upon as "trash" by most:

> The word pulp refers to the cheap quality of the paper used in old magazines, although to many it also connotes the sensational nature of the material therein. One thinks of cheap romance stories or gossip publications when one hears pulp, not literature. But science fiction is definitely literature, and many of America's greatest writers were published in the pulps.[8]

Astounding was different than other magazines of its day, in that it published both science fiction stories and discussions of real scientific facts. Readers were encouraged to write in, and ongoing discussions were published monthly in the back section entitled, "Brass Tacks."[9]

In the middle of 1932, "economic hardships" forced *Astounding* to publish bi-monthly instead of monthly.[10] After the March, 1933 issue, the magazine folded temporarily. It came back immediately, in the fall of 1933, with a new editor, F. Orlin Tremaine and a new publisher, Street

---

[5] Lester Del Rey. The World of Science Fiction, 1926 - 1976. Garland. New York. 1980.
[6] Forrest J. Ackerman. The World of Science Fiction. 1997. p. 125.
[7] See Appendix One for a copy of the first editorial, January 1930, by Bates.
[8] Ackerman, p. 107.
[9] See any issue of *Astounding*, 1930 - 1940, for an example of this ongoing discourse.
[10] Ackerman, p. 127.

& Smith. The magazine promised "our purpose is to bring to you each month one story carrying a new and unexplored 'thought variant' in the field of scientific fiction."[11] Between 1935 and 1937, *Astounding* published popular authors such as John Taine, John Campbell writing as Don A. Stuart, H. P. Lovecraft, and Eric Fank Russell.

In 1937, author John Wood Campbell, Jr. took over as editor. He introduced readers to authors such as Isaac Asimov, Robert Heinlein, and Raymond F. Jones. He also published work by established writers like Eric Frank Russell, Ray Bradbury, L. Ron Hubbard, and his own work under the pen-name Don Stuart. Campbell brought both the magazine and the science fiction genre credibility and fame. In the SF field, Campbell is called "SF's most influential editor."[12] As Jack Williamson said upon Campbell's death in 1971, "...Campbell is the third major name in its [science fiction's] history. In the whole domain of science fiction, we are all his debtors."[13] Campbell opened *Astounding* magazine to include stories which could "devote much more attention to the sociology and psychology of the future (or past) than to its technological or scientific newness."[14]

To this day, *Analog* is successful. It's long-standing history is worthy of closer study. This study intends to find themes and use of gender by looking at *Analog* magazine. By studying its history (from 1930 - 1995), a module for a larger study that could be applied to more science fiction magazines will hopefully develop.

---

[11] Ibid.
[12] Brooks Landon. Science Fiction After 1900: From Steam Man to the Stars. 1997. p. 55.
[13] Ackerman, p. 130.
[14] Landon, p. 56.

Methodology

This study is designed to analyze *Analog* magazine's use of cover art. It seeks to establish if *Analog* magazine used women in its cover art, what themes or types of women (human and/or alien, for example) it used, and during which times of its life-span it used females.[15] Some questions to be considered are:

1. Are certain images of women used more frequently than others? If women are used, are they placed in "seductive" positions?
2. In the last three decades, as targeting audiences became increasingly more important to magazine sales, have the cover images changed? Have they increased or decreased their use of women?
3. In recent years, has there been a shift to androgyny in the cover art? Or, are their covers predominantly the same as decades ago?

To answer these questions, the cover art will be categorized and analyzed as described below.

Part A

First, magazine covers from *Analog* magazine are to be collected. Each monthly cover, from 1930 to 1995, will be collected for analysis, which is to include at least 12 covers per year. After the cover images are collected, they will be categorized into the groups listed below. The purpose here is to find what images were used and what images of women are most common. The covers will first be divided into those with women and those without. For the purpose of this study, those covers without females will not be considered. Also, "alien" refers to any creature that is not human, including monsters, robots, animals, or other life-forms.

The cover images with women will first be divided as:

1. Covers with images of women exclusively.
2. Covers with women and men.
3. Covers that depict female aliens.
4. Covers with aliens and women.
5. Covers with both humans (male and female) and aliens.[16]

---

[15] A pilot study conducted of *Analog* did suggest the magazine used women in its cover art.

[16] A category of "other" may be added if necessary. Also, if other categories become evident during the categorization process, they will be added and noted in the Discussion section of this paper.

Covers with women will then be broken into sub-categories by body representation:

1. Full view (entire body is shown).
2. Face only.
3. Body only, no face.
4. Half-view (the upper torso).

These covers will also be designated as "seductive," taking into consideration clothing, or lack thereof, body position, and body representation.

Finally, the covers will be sub-divided into the representation of dominance:

1. Women and men, equally represented on the cover (similar size).
2. Women that are dominated by men.
3. Women that are dominated by an alien, monster or animal.
4. Women that are dominating a man or men.
5. Women that are dominating an alien or aliens.

Dominance here refers to the subject being controlled by another or controlling another. This will lend information in respect to common themes found within the images.

Part B

As the cover images are divided into categories, the years in which they appear will be listed by groups. This is to find out if images of women are used during peaks or valleys of popularity. Lester Del Rey's divisions, from his book The World of Science Fiction, 1926 - 1976[17], will be used. He divided SF into the following eras:

1.	"The Age of Wonder"	1926 - 1937
2.	"The Golden Age"	1938 - 1949
3.	"The Age of Acceptance"	1950 - 1961
4.	"The Age of Rebellion"	1962 - 1973
5.	"The Fifth Age"	1974 - 1980

---

[17] Lester Del Rey is highly respected in the field of Science Fiction studies, therefore his divisions of decades are used.

To bridge the gap between 1985 and 1995, two other categories must be added. Therefore, the researcher has named:

6. "The Next Age" 1981 - 1989
7. "The Future Age" 1990 - present (stopping at 1995)

This phase seeks to find if more images of women are used during high or low points in SF popularity. Also, it seeks to find if there was a significant change in cover art after 1965, when SF magazines began targeting their audiences.

Results

Between 1930 and 1995, *Analog* published approximately 800 issues.[18] Out of this 800, approximately 80 used women on their covers.[19] Meaning, roughly 10% of *Analog's* covers depicted women.

Table 1: Representation of Women in Analog's Cover Art

Exclusively women	17
Women and men	30
Female aliens	3
Women and aliens	14
Men, women, and aliens	12

Table 1 shows the largest groups were portrayals of men and women (30); exclusively women (17); and men, women, and aliens (12). (See also Appendix 2). Table 2 shows that most of the representations of women were full body views. (This full body view means that the entire form of the woman was shown.) Interesting to note, there were only three covers that depicted a discernible female alien (one in 1941, one in 1989, and one in 1993).

Only 24 were considered "seductive," meaning that the women presented were either scantily clad, or were posing seductively. Those posing seductively included those arching their backs, bending forward, or similar "sexy" positions. Most of the women portrayed were fully clothed and their entire body is shown (See also Appendix 2). There were only two covers that portrayed a woman's naked body; one in which the body is shadowed almost entirely and can hardly be seen (May, 1939) and another that depicts a sketch of a naked female body as part of a spaceship (August, 1970). Also interesting to note, although not quantified, there was an increase of naked men in the late 1940s (See December 1947 and February 1948 for examples). One cover, February 1955, even depicted men dressed in women's clothing.[20]

---

[18] Usually, Analog published 12 issues per year; however, "bonus" issues were sometimes released, such as the mid-December bonus issues.

[19] This number does not include the few covers in which very tiny (no larger than .5mm), shadowy women were used in the backgrounds.

Table 2: Representation of Women's Bodies

Full View	39
Face Only	12
Body Only	3
Half View	34

The prevalent theme in the earlier decades, was that of "rescue." The women were shown as being rescued by men from either a threat of war, of an alien, or an explosion. Usually, the men were saving the women from aliens. As Table 3 shows, there were no images in which women were dominating men or saving men from any threat (See also Appendix 3). Women were predominantly being held back by men or being held captive by aliens. Table 3 also shows that the women were frequently equal in representation to men, with similar sized depictions. Interesting to note, only three covers depicted women dominating aliens. These did not occur until 1968, and were usually images of women riding on the backs of either animals or alien-animals.

Table 3: Representations of Women's Relative Dominance

Equal to Men	25
Dominated by Men	8
Dominated by Alien	7
Dominating Men	0
Dominating Alien	4

In later years, women are depicted as strong, or at least stronger than they were in the 1930s through the 1950s. Th rescued occasionally, they were more predominantly featured as powerful characters, standing alone. The 1970s brought them weapons. The 1980s brought them uniforms and portrayals of leadership. The 1990s have brought even more women to the covers of *Analog*. Already, eight have been depicted in the first half of this decade. They are predominantly strong, although they are more scantily clad than their sisters in the 1960s and 1970s. They are as seductive as their sisters in the 1930s and 1940s (See also Appendix 3). The seductive woman image is evenly dispersed throughout the decades, as well as are women dispersed throughout each decade, as Table 4 shows.

---

[20] Also included in the last Appendix, aside from all the covers of women, are the first issue in which the word "Analog" appeared on the cover (Feb. 1960) and examples of other cover art for reference.

Table 4: Representations of Women by Year

1926 - 1937	10
1938 - 1949	12
1950 - 1961	9
1962 - 1973	11
1974 - 1980	8
1981 - 1989	13
1990 - 1995	8

Discussion

The most surprising finding of this study was the lack of women in *Analog's* cover art. Science fiction has a reputation of portraying women in its art. However, *Analog* seems to only scatter women over its covers at various times, almost equally throughout its life-span. No singular month nor time of year was targeted. It does not seem as though they put more women on the covers when sales are down, nor when sales are up; on the contrary, they seem to use women for only one readily apparent reason: they represent a story within the magazine.

The women are at times portrayed in the usual themes: as the victim or the scared female in need of rescue. However, there are stronger images as well, such as the soldier and the leader. There was only one image of a mother (February, 1969). There was no one common image that was repeated, nor was one image used more often than another. The only predominant common theme was that of the women being held, either by a man or an alien, and this was more prevalent in the earlier decades.

Also surprising was the low number of "seductive" women. The bias of the researcher should be taken into account here, for what is "seductive" to one may or may not be seductive to another. However, only a mere 24 out of 80 covers had women with partial clothing or posed with an arching back. Comparing that number to the popular belief that science fiction always portrays its women as sexy is startling.

As targeting audiences became more important, *Analog* did not increase its use of women. It has in the 1990s, however, and it remains to be seen if it will continue to increase its use of women in its cover art. The cover images did change as targeting increased: they became brighter in color, and included more fantastical images of other worlds, futuristic spaceships, and planets. However, it cannot be surmised whether this was due to targeting alone or to better print technology and/or artists.

There has not been a significant shift towards androgyny in its covers. Within the older covers, it was hard to discern whether the aliens depicted were male or female, and it continues to be hard to tell the aliens' gender in today's cover art. The cover art did represent women in their current view by society; meaning, for example, that covers of the 1950s showed images of women with 1950s hairstyles and clothing, as did all the other decades. A specific study just of these representations, that appear on first glance to be accurate to real-life portraits of the image(s) that was popular in specific decades, should be conducted, for it promises interesting results.

This small study leads to more questions. For example, is *Analog* an accurate representation of other science fiction magazines? A comparison of other magazines should be conducted in the future, to see if *Analog* is an anomaly or a standard in the field. There are limitations in studying only one magazine. However, studying *Analog* makes for a remarkable look at one magazine's life-span. A larger study should delve into its story content, images within the pages of the magazine, and its advertisements. A more in-depth study of the magazine may lend greater information as to what the cause of its incredible success is and has been. One thing is certain, *Analog* remains one of the most successful magazines of the genre.

In respect to this study, the results speak for themselves. At first glance, it seems as though *Analog* has a respect for women that other publications of the genre do not. A larger study of the magazine, combined with this information about the cover art could lead to a greater understanding of the magazine itself, and to a larger understanding of this popular genre.

Appendix 1: From Ackerman's World of Science Fiction, page 125.
Astounding's first editorial, January 1930
INTRODUCING —

ASTOUNDING STORIES

What are "astounding" stories?

Well, if you lived in Europe in 1490, and someone told you the earth was round and moved around the sun — that would have been an "astounding" story.

Or if you lived in 1840, and were told that some day men a thousand miles apart would be able to talk to each other through a little wire — or without any wires — that would have been another.

Or if, in 1900, they predicted ocean-crossing airplanes and submarines, world-girdling Zeppelins, sixty-story buildings, radio, metal that can be made to resist gravity and gloat in the air — those would have been other "astounding" stories.

To-day time has gone by, and all these things are commonplace. That is the only real difference between the astounding and the commonplace — Time.

To-morrow, more astounding things are going to happen. Your children — or their children — are going to take a trip to the moon. They will be able to render themselves invisible — a problem that has already been partly solved. They will be able to disintegrate their bodies in New York and reintegrate them in China — and in a matter of seconds.

Astounding? Indeed, yes.

Impossible? Well — television would have been impossible, almost unthinkable, ten years ago.

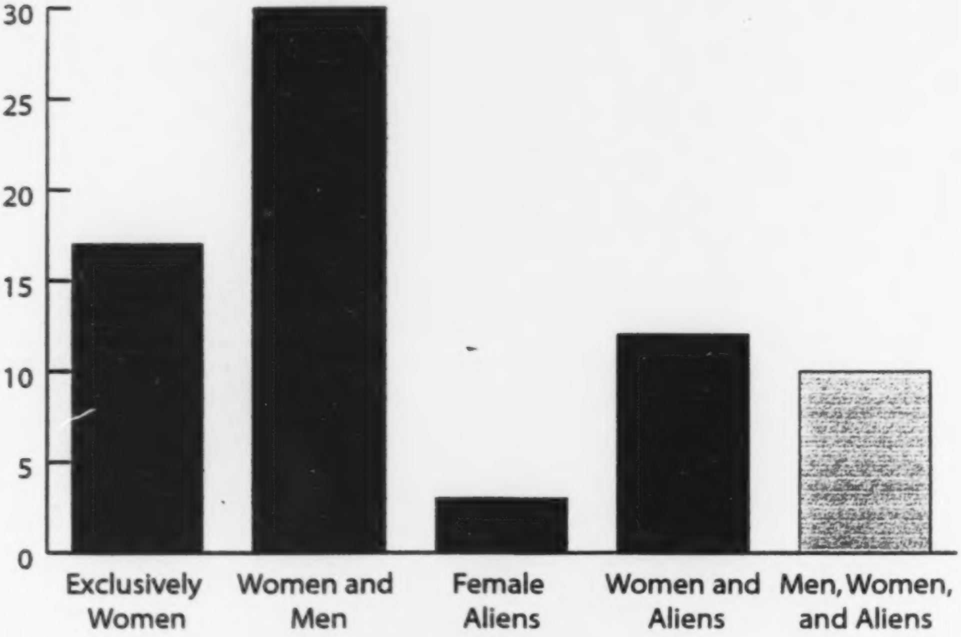
Now you will see the kind of magazine that it is our pleasure to offer you beginning with this, the first number of ASTOUNDING STORIES.

It is a magazine whose stories will anticipate the super-scientific achievements of To-morrow — whose stories will not only be strictly accurate in their science but will be vividly, dramatically and thrillingly told.

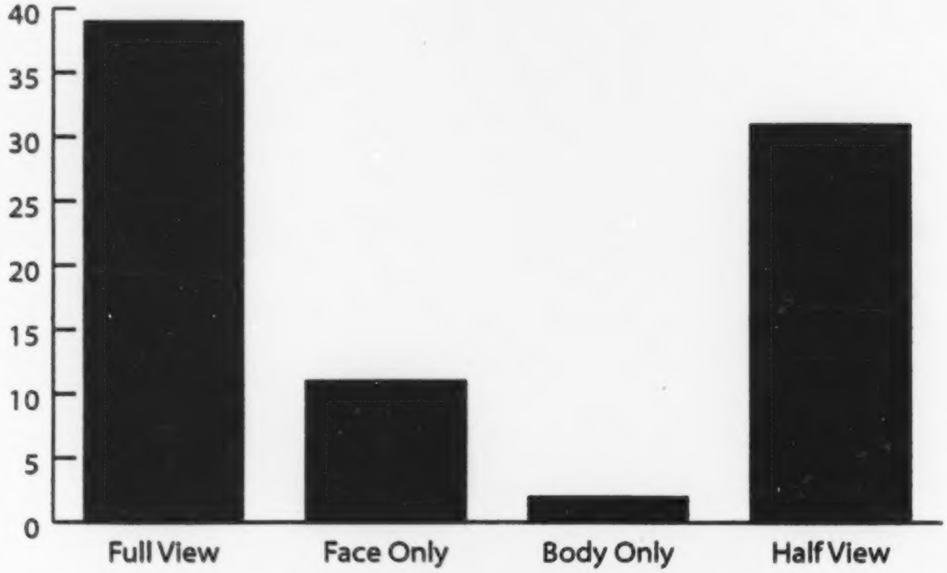
Already we have secured stories by some of the finest writers of fantasy in the world — men such as Ray Cummings, Murray Leinster, Captain S. P Meek, Harl Vincent, R. F. Starzl and Victor Rousseau.

So — order your next month's copy of ASTOUNDING STORIES in advance! —The Editor.

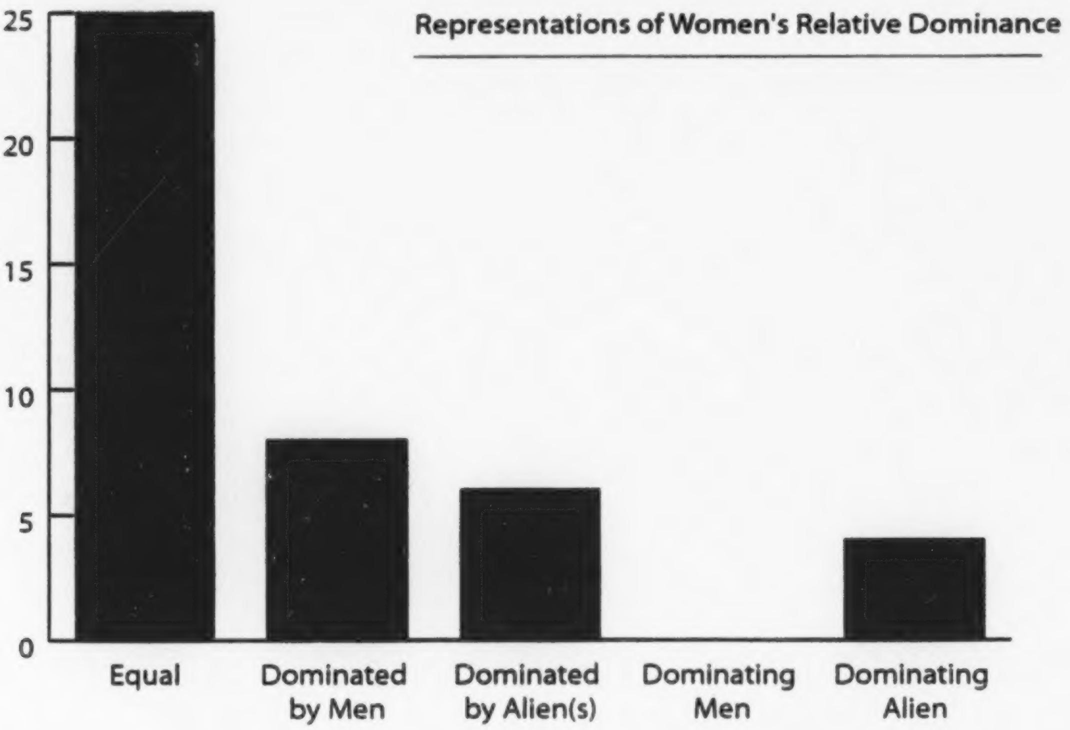
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

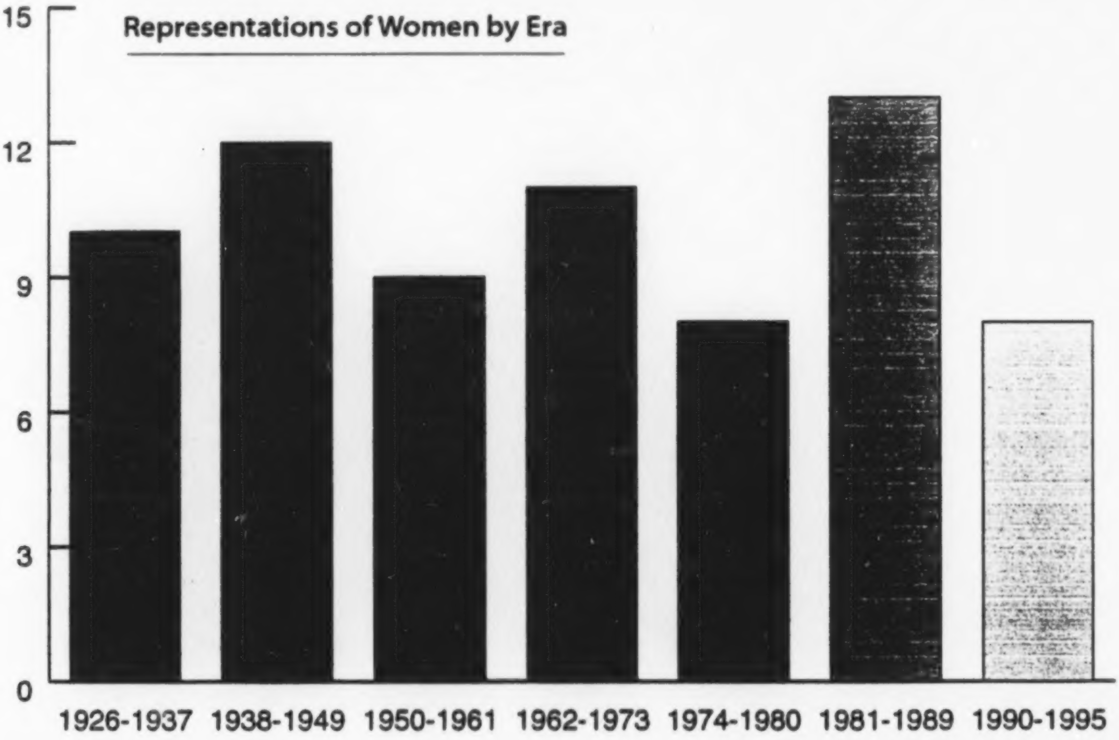


Representations of Women by Association



Representations of Women's Bodies


Representations of Women's Relative Dominance
25
20
15
10
5
0
Equal
Dominated by Men
Dominated by Alien(s)
Dominating Men
Dominating Alien


Representations of Women by Era
15
12
9
6
3
0
1926-1937
1938-1949
1950-1961
1962-1973
1974-1980
1981-1989
1990-1995

Bibliography

Asimov, I. (1981). Asimov on Science Fiction. New York: Doubleday.

Abrahamson, D. (1996). Magazine-made America: The cultural transformation of the postwar periodical. New Jersey: Hampton Press.

Ackerman, Forrest J. (1997). Forrest J. Ackerman's World of Science Fiction. California: General Publishing Group, Inc.

Angenot, M. & Suvin, D. (1979). "Not only but Also: Reflections on Cognition and Ideology in Science Fiction and SF Criticism." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 6, 168 - 179.

Barthel, D. (1988). Putting on Appearances: Gender and Advertising. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Baumgartner, H., Sujan, M., & Padgett, D. (1997). "Patterns of Affective Reactions to Advertisements: The Integration of Moment-to-Moment Responses into Overall Judgments." *Journal of Marketing Research*, May, 219 - 233.

Ben-Yehuda, N. (1986). "The Revival of the Occult and of Science Fiction." *Journal of Popular Culture*, 1 - 16.

Borgmeier, R. (1990). "Objectives and Methods in the Analysis of Science Fiction: The Case of *Science-Fiction Studies*." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 17, 383 - 391.

Bridgstock, M. (1983). "A Psychological Approach to 'Hard' Science Fiction." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 10, 50 - 57.

Burdrys, A. (1984). "Can Speculative-Fiction Writers and Scholars Do Each Other Good?" *Extrapolation*, 25:4, 306 - 313.

Clayton, David. (1986). "What Makes Hard Science Fiction 'Hard'?" Hard Science Fiction. ed. by George E. Slusser and Eric S. Rabhin. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Clute, J. (1995). Science Fiction: The Illustrated Encyclopedia. London: Dorling Kindersley.

Darley, W. & Smith, R. (1995). "Gender Differences in Information Processing Strategies: An Empirical Test of the Selectivity Model in Advertising Response." *Journal of Advertising*, 24:1. 41 - 56.

Deighton, J. & Grayson, K.(1995) "Marketing and Seduction: Building Exchange Relationships by Managing Social Consensus." *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21, 660 - 677.

Del Rey, L.(1980). The World of Science Fiction: 1926 - 1976, The History of a Subculture. Garland: New York.

Finn, Seth. (1997). "Origins of Media Exposure: Linking Personality Traits to TV, Radio, Print, and Film Use." *Communication Research*, 24:5, 507 - 529.

Franklin, H. B. (1982). "America as Science Fiction: 1939." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 9, 38 - 50.

Frewin, A. (191974). One Hundred Years of Science Fiction Illustration. Jupiter Books: London.

Gunn, J. (1975). Alternate Worlds: The Illustrated History of Science Fiction. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Gunn, J. (Ed.) (1988). The New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction. New York: Penguin.

Jameson, F. (1982). "Towards a New Awareness of Genre." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 9:3, 322 - 324.

Jones, J. P. (1995). When Ads Work: New Proof that Advertising Triggers Sales. New York: Lexington.

Landon, Brooks. (1997). "John W. Campbell and the 'Astounding' Era." Science Fiction After 1900: From Steam Man to the Stars. New York: Simon & Schuster.

* Larew, K. (1997). "Planet Women: The Image of Women in Planet Comics, 1940-1953." *Historian: A Journal of History*, 59:3, 590 - 612.

Lefanu, S. (1988). Feminism and Science Fiction. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Lowentrout, P. (1987). "The Influence of Speculative Fiction of the Religious Formation of the Young: A preliminary Statistical Investigation." *Extrapolation*, 28:4, 345 - 359.

Miles, I. (1993). "Stranger than Fiction: How Important is Science Fiction for Futures Studies?" *Futures*, 25:3, 315 - 321.

Peterson, T. (1956). Magazines in the Twentieth Century. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Philmus, R. (1984). "New Possibilities for Research on Science Fiction." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 11, 204 - 209.

Pohl, F. (1997). "The Study of Science Fiction: A Modest Proposal." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 24, 11 - 16.

Richins, M. (1997). "Measuring Emotions in the Consumption Experience. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24, 127 - 146.

Roberts, R. (1987). "The Female Alien: Pulp Science Fiction's Legacy to Feminists." *Journal of Popular Culture*, 21:2, 33 - 54.

Also found in: A New Species: Gender & Science in Science Fiction. "Chapter 2: The Female Alien: Pulp Science Fiction's Legacy to Feminists." University of Illinois Press: 1993. pp. 40 - 65

Rottensteiner, F. (1975). The Science Fiction Book: An Illustrated History. London: Thames and Hudson.

Russ, J. (1980). "*Amor Vincit Foeminam*: The Battle of the Sexes in Science Fiction." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 7, 2 - 15.

Sanders, J. (1994). Science Fiction Fandom. Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

Scott, W. (1913). The Psychology of Advertising. Boston: Small, Maynard & Company.

Spinks, C. W. (1986). "Motifs in Science Fiction as Archetypes of Science." *Extrapolation*, 27:2, 93 - 108.

Stern, B. (1993). "Feminist Literary Criticism and the Deconstruction of Ads: A Postmodern View of Advertising and Consumer Responses." *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19, 556 - 566.

Stern, B. (1996). "Textual Analysis in Advertising Research: Construction and Deconstruction of Meanings." *Journal of Advertising*, 25:3, 61 - 73.

Suvin, D. (1982). "Narrative Logic, Ideological Domination, and the Rage of Science Fiction: A Hypothesis with a Historical Test." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 9:1, 1 - 25.

* Svilpis, J. E. (1983). "Science-Fiction Magazine Illustration: A Semiotic Analysis." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 10, 278 - 291.

Swan, C. (1955). Tested Advertising Copy: 201 tests of 480 ads, with factual results in readership, inquiries or sales — and analyses of basic success factors for ad copy as viewed by Gallup, Politz, Shepard and Schwerin. New York: Printers' Ink Books.

Taft, W. (1982). American Magazines for the 1980s. New York: Hastings House.

Theall, D. (1980). "On Science Fiction as Symbolic Communication." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 7, 247 - 263.

Tymn, M. & Ashley, M. (1985). Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Weird Fiction Magazines. Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

Westfahl, G. (1995). "Wanted: A Symbol for Science Fiction." *Science-Fiction Studies*, 22, 1 - 21.

Wolseley, R. (1973). The Changing Magazine: Trends in Readership and Management. New York: Hastings House.

Zgorzelski, A. (1979). "Is Science Fiction a Genre of Fantastic Literature?" Science-Fiction Studies, 6, 296 - 303.

Women's Magazines Used Agenda-Setting, Priming in Effort To Influence '96 Election

by
Ernest C. Hynds, Ph.D.
Professor of Journalism
and Mass Communication
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602-3018
ehynds@arches.uga.edu

(A paper prepared for delivery to the Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at its annual convention in Baltimore, Maryland, August 5-8, 1998.)

Women's Magazines Used Agenda-Setting, Priming In Effort To Influence '96 Election

Election data, opinion survey results, and analysis of voter performance make it clear that women voters played a major role in the re-election of President Bill Clinton. Men split their votes almost evenly between the two candidates: 43% for Clinton and 44% for Republican challenger Bob Dole. But 54% of women supported Clinton while only 38% supported Dole. The other votes of both men and women were divided among other candidates, including Ross Perot. The 11% spread between women and men who voted for Clinton is believed to be the largest gender gap in U.S. political history.

There are, of course, many reasons why individuals, women and men, vote as they do. Perceptions of the candidates, party affiliations, and past records of the candidates, as well as candidates' positions on political, economic, social and other issues can all contribute to the decision-making process. Age, appearance, and various other factors could be important for some. Baby boomers, for example, may have perceived Clinton as one of them and Dole as someone from the past. Mass media often contribute to the decision-making process by providing the perceptions that voters have of the candidates and much of what they know about their records and their positions on issues. Whatever the reasons for the decisions, it's clear that women as a group took a different view of the candidates than men and voted accordingly. Exploring why they did and whether the mass media influenced their decisions can perhaps help both parties determine what they can do better next time.

Various theories have been advanced to explain why women and men viewed the candidates so differently. Perhaps the most accepted view is that Clinton's responses to issues that women believed important were more nearly in line with women's views of those issues than Dole's. Moreover, Clinton had a record of seeking legislation and supporting programs that would be beneficial to women. Some women raised questions about Clinton's character, but most evidently believed that he had served, and would serve, their interests better than Dole had, or would. These perceptions almost certainly were enforced, if not created, by the mass media. But which media? Was it television, with its often negative sound bites, that exerted the primary influence on women's knowledge and perceptions of candidates? Studies often cite television as the most influential medium. Newspapers and radio do not appear to be major contributors. Newspapers are still seeking ways to get women readers back, or attract them for the first time. But what about magazines, women's magazines, in particular? Did they exert significant influence on women voters and thus on the outcome of the election?

Conservative columnist Brent Bozell asserted in December, 1996 that women's magazines had exerted a strong liberal influence on women's thinking about government by becoming active participants in public policy discussions. "They are every bit as reliably liberal as the national news media," he said, "and [they] are exercising a huge impact on the cultural conversation." Bozell based his assertion on the findings of a joint study of 13 women's magazines by Consumer Alert and the Media Research Center between October, 1995 and September, 1996. He said the study identified many examples of liberal bias. For example, 115 stories gave a positive portrayal of government activism, called for greater federal control over society, or both. Only 18 stories presented a negative view of government activism, called for less government, or both. Bozell said that on 23 occasions the magazines actually urged readers to lobby for bigger government but not once did they urge readers to lobby for less government control of the economy. He cited instances where various magazines called for support of gun control and opposition to proposed welfare reforms. Bozell said the study found *Glamour* and *Working Woman* to be the two most biased publications followed by *Good Housekeeping*. *Ladies' Home Journal* was described as the most balanced of the magazines studied, though it still tilted slightly to the left.[1] Other magazines included in the study are *Better Homes & Garden, Family Circle, Mademoiselle, McCall's, Parents, Prevention, Redbook, Weight Watchers* and *Woman's Day*.

Bozell asserted that these magazines reach millions of subscribers, single copy buyers and pass-along readers and exert considerable influence. He reported, for example, that *Good Housekeeping* had bragged about the fact that 50,000 readers had filled out a lobbying coupon enclosed in the January issue and that *Redbook* had described itself in July as "the White House's secret weapon." It was reported that the Clinton administration had decided to target the demographic profile which *Redbook's* readers constitute and called the plan its Redbook Strategy. "The left is using these magazines to characterize conservative policies as anti-woman, anti-family," Bozell said in summarizing his report on the study. "The situation -- and an audience of 50 million -- demands a response from the right. If the GOP wants to close the gender gap, women's and family magazines should no longer be ignored." [2]

Are women's magazines really that influential? Do they make a concerted effort to influence their readers on issues? If so, how? Do they believe they can have influence? Is there a liberal bias in most of the women's magazines, or do most seek to provide a balanced coverage of issues? Did they have a significance influence on the 1996 presidential election?

Some of these questions have been addressed in previous research studies, including a survey of general interest, news, political and social topics, and women's magazines reported at the AEJMC convention in Washington in 1995. Almost all (96%) of the women's magazines included in that survey identified informing readers about issues such as health care and crime as important functions of their magazines. More than three-fourths (81%) identified reporting news of interest to readers as an important function, and almost as many (78%) said interpreting and analyzing such news was an important function. Almost three fourths (74%) identified providing a forum for the discussion of issues which are important to readers as an important function, and more than half (56%) identified providing benchmarks through editorials and labeled commentary as an important function. The percentage of women's magazines identifying these matters as important was in most cases as high or higher than the percentages for magazines in the other categories.

Almost all of the women's magazines (93%) said they provide information on social or political issues such as health care, crime, education, and the environment "often" (63%) or "occasionally" (30%). Most indicated that they seek to influence readers' thinking or actions by "selection of articles to be published" (89%) or by the "presentation (content and writing) of articles" (85%). Smaller percentages (20 to 41%) said they make use of editorials, essays, columns, and other labeled commentary in an effort to exert influence. More than three-fourths said they believe their coverage of issues has had "much influence" (44%) or "considerable influence" (33%) on their readers. Most (89%) said they exert influence by prompting readers to consider new ideas; 85% said they provide information readers need and seek; 63% said they reenforce existing beliefs; 56% said they have a long-range, cumulative influence on continuing readers; and 44% said at times they persuade readers to change their minds. [3]

Individual women's magazines have been part of a long tradition of magazines seeking to help individuals and communities improve themselves. Historian Theodore Peterson asserted that magazines were responsible in some measure for the social and political reforms achieved in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. He said they not only interpreted issues and events, but also placed them in a national perspective and helped foster a sense of national community.[4] Women's magazines have joined in the debate over health care, crime, education and other issues over the years. The *Ladies' Home Journal* was among the leaders in the fight for pure food and drug laws at the turn of the century, and it has become involved in various causes since, including the fight against illegal drugs and the battle to get answers on the Missing in

Action in the Vietnam War.[5] *Glamour* has taken strong, sometimes controversial, stands, under the leadership of Ruth Whitney for more than 25 years. It has been a leader in the fight for human rights, including the rights of minorities and women, and unlike most women's magazines it has used editorials in its campaigns. Mrs. Whitney said several years ago, "I truly believe that if six months go by and you have offended neither your readers nor you advertisers, chances are you're not doing your job as editor."[6] *Family Circle* presented a special report on the dangers of handguns to children several years ago, and later joined with *Essence* in presenting a study of race in America.[7] Many other examples could be cited.

Most Americans say they are interested in information about government and elections, but they may be looking in the wrong medium for it. The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research reported in 1996 that four of five persons closely followed campaign news and relied on the media, primarily television for information. Studies indicate, moreover, that people are not satisfied with the coverage provided. They said the media didn't focus enough on candidates' positions on issues or explain how the election's outcome would affect their lives.[8] Another study reported that less than half (48%) of the respondents believed media coverage of the presidential campaign was evenly balanced; 29 percent said it had a liberal bias, 13 percent a conservative bias, and 10 percent said they didn't know.[9]

Magazines along with other mass media have shown their potential to join with concerned citizens willing to become positively involved in their communities in reaching solutions to community problems. They can be powerful socializing agents in setting agendas for political campaigns and for public officials; serving as watchdogs on government, business and other institutions; creating an awareness of public problems and possible solutions; encouraging people to get involved in their government through voting and service in civic groups; and providing the information and benchmarks they need to make decisions and take action. Because of their greater ability to explore, analyze, and report on issues in depth, print media such as magazines and newspapers are best situated to provide the information and benchmarks that citizens need to become effectively involved in government at all levels.

Purpose and Approach of Study

The purpose of the current study is to 1) explore the extent to which women's magazines in the 1996 election provided the information, analysis, benchmarks and forums which many women's magazine editors identified in a 1995 survey as functions of their magazines; 2) ascertain if there is support for Bozell's contention that women's magazines have exerted a strong liberal influence on their readers; 3) determine if women's magazines helped set the election agendas of their readers and the presidential candidates; and 4) consider whether women's magazines through agenda-setting and priming helped produce the women's vote which made President Clinton's re-election a reality.

Content analysis of selected women's magazines was used to determine if they provided benchmarks and forums, if they tended to be liberal in their views, and if they helped set an agenda for the discussion of issues. The magazines were selected to represent various types of womens magazines; traditional, lifestyle/fashion, minority, and new women's publications. The study included *Essence, Family Circle, Glamour, Good Housekeeping, Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, Ms.*, and *Working Woman*. All except *Essence* and *Ms.* were included in the study reported by Bozell. Monthlies were checked for September, October, and November, and weeklies for the four weeks prior to the election. All materials related to the election were classified according to type and stand, if any, on the election: pro-Clinton; pro-Dole, and neutral. Materials that opposed one of the candidates were considered as favoring the other one. Magazines that presented materials on both sides were judged to be providing forums.

Reports of opinion polls, including exit polls, and election analyses were used to explore the possibility of priming, which takes places when individuals use the issues and information highlighted by the press as standards to judge public officials or political candidates. A classic example of priming came in 1992 when the media primed the nation's economic problems rather than its success in the Gulf War and the recently popular President George Bush lost the election to Bill Clinton.[10]

Results of Content Analysis

The women's magazines ran three times as many items favoring the Democrats as favoring the Republicans, 9-3, but six of them were in two magazines -- four in *Ms.* and two in *Essence*. They also ran almost a dozen items that were judged neutral. The principal item in *Ms.* was a long article by Gloria Steinem, its founding editor, attacking conservatives, especially right-wing conservatives, and listing reasons why women should vote for the Democrats. It includes a graphic compiled by Pamela Green that shows how the candidates stand on issues such as abortion, affirmative action, family and medical leave, job discrimination against lesbians and gays, and the Violence Against Women Act. It's titled "The Truth Squad: If you think the candidates are really the same, look again." Steinem asserts that "right-wing victories have almost always depended on turning on the conservative minority, and turning off everybody else," and she warned readers the right wing will try that again in 1996. She closed with the admonition, "Remember: we're not voting for Clinton or against Dole. We're voting for ourselves" ("Voting As Rebellion: There's A Conspiracy To Turn Women Voters Off. The Question Is: Will We Turn Ourselves On?", September/October).

Ms also carried an article concerning the answers of a conservative candidate in a New Hampshire Congressional race to a questionnaire distributed by the bipartisan, pro-choice organization Voters for Choice. The results were used to support the magazine's position that right-wing candidates do not support women's rights ("A Right-Winger Mouths Off," September/October). The magazine carried a cartoon that favored the Democrats. It was labeled "Why Dogs Are Better Than Republicans, Reason #22," and it showed a national forest whose trees had all been cut down. It carried the comment, "When a dog's done with a tree, it's still standing" (September/October). Ms. also ran a short item critical of a county Republican organization in Nebraska. The item indicated that the party there didn't care whether it attracted Jews and Moslems ("The Religious Right?", September/October).

Essence ran a commentary by the Rev. Jesse Jackson, founder and president of the National Rainbow Coalition, urging African-Americans to vote for Clinton. "My real fear is not that African-Americans, workers and city voters will choose Republican nominee Bob Dole over President Clinton," he wrote. "My fear is that too many people will abandon the political system and simply stay home in despair, just as they did in 1994." Jackson criticized Clinton for signing a welfare bill that "is an unconscionable and indefensible act of domestic violence against poor women and children," but indicated that in the 1996 election he is the best option. He admonished readers that they are the answer. "We make presidents and governors and Congress members," he said. "They don't make us" ("It's Up to Us," November). *Essence* also ran a version of the advertisement run in *Ebony* and *Jet* that urges African-Americans to vote for Clinton/Gore. It showed a father and two sons, and began with the headline, "On Nov. 5th, I'm Voting for My Kids"

Glamour presented a critical look at the records and positions on issues of both candidates in an article by Margaret Carlson, a columnist at *Time* and panelist for CNN's Capital Gang. Her analysis favored Clinton but also pointed out a number of things he could do better or differently to help women. Carlson warns women to listen carefully to the promises they will hear from both candidates before the election and check their records, which she said provide a better basis for voter decisions than their vows. Jennifer Gonnerman, a contributing writer at *The Village Voice*, provided a number of short sidebars for this article on such things as the meaning of character in the election,the role of vice presidents, and which sections of the country have the most women voters ("Election '96: A Wake-up Call for Women: Here's the analysis you won't hear on TV.")

Working Woman and *McCall's* also ran items favorable to the Democrats, and *McCall's* had an item favorable to the Republicans. *Working Woman* ran a full-page article in its "BizBuzz" section criticizing the Republicans' affirmative action strategy and Dole for abandoning such programs and a short sidebar criticizing Dole for his position on abortion rights. The short item criticized Dole's answer to a woman in New York who had asked him about his stand on abortion rights. He was quoted as saying, "Where are you -- working for the press now? I know they put you up to it." The BizBuzs response was: "Right, Bob. Women don't care about choice. It's just another phony issue the press cooked up" ("How the GOP's Affirmative-Action strategy Could Backfire" and "Rat Patrol," September).

McCall's included both Hillary Rodham Clinton and Elizabeth Dole in its 120th anniversary salute "to women we've deemed rule breakers, influential role models who owe their success to not necessarily conforming to confortable stereotypes" ("Rule Breakers Hall of Fame," November). The overall coverage may have tilted to the Democrats, however, since Mrs. Clinton was pictured with Editor-in-Chief Sally Koslow in her column about the anniversary issue and its theme ("We hope you enjoy our birthday celebration," November).

On the other side, *Ms.* ran an "Opinion" by Barbara Ehrenreich that was favorable to the Republicans and a cartoon that appeared to be critical of both parties. Ehrenreich criticized Clinton for abandoning "activism" on behalf of the downtrodden and social issues and for gagging the left instead of recharging it on issues such as the environment. In closing, she said,"My unvote for Clinton (I wrote in Ralph Nader) was a vote against further quiessence, co-optation, and delusion. If it could have helped elect Dole -- well, that was a risk I was wiling to take"

("Why I Didn't Vote for Clinton," November/December). The cartoon by Mike Luckovich was reprinted from the *Atlanta Constitution*. It showed figures from both parties looking without guilt at a child labeled "Poor." The caption said, "It Takes A Village To Abandon A Child."

As expected, some of the best election reporting in the women's magazines was classified as neutral. A number of magazines sought to provide a forum for discussion, and most at least contributed to such a forum. Traditional magazines such as the *Ladies' Home Journal, Good Housekeeping* and *Family Circle* provided coverage of the issues and candidates through interviews, polls, and discussions. The *Journal* capped its coverage of the election by presenting in a question-and-answer format interviews with both the Clintons and the Doles. For six months prior to these interviews, the magazine had worked with the League of Women Voters in a Power the Vote Campaign to inform readers about election issues most important to women. In the concluding feature, Myrna Blyth, editor-in-chief of the *Journal,* and Becky Cain, president of the League, interviewed the candidates about issues and their personal lives. The questions were similar, but not the same. President Clinton said his top goal was to get the country ready to move into the 21st century --"to restore opportunity, create a strong sense of responsibility in our country and bring us closer together as a community." Dole said his first priorities would be a balanced-budget amendment, a balanced budget, and a revision of the tax system. Mrs. Clinton indicated a desire to work for improvements in foster-care and adoption and for health care, especially for children. Besides supporting her husband's efforts, Mrs. Dole said she would like to continue her work with the Red Cross ("The Clintons & The Doles: Exclusive LJH Interviews," November). The *Journal's* earlier coverage had included articles such as "How Much Government Should There Be?" and "Dole vs. Clinton: How the Candidates Would Change the Government" in September, and "How To Watch A Political Debate," "My First Vote," "Clinton vs. Dole: where they stand on the three top issues (taxes, crime and welfare)," and "How To

Protect Yourself from Toxic Politics" in October.

Working Woman presented the responses of Clinton and Dole staff members to a series of questions on issues that it determined from polling data and discussions with readers matter most to working women. The questions covered such things as affirmative action, whether the federal government or the states should deal with the homeless and indigent, abortions, workers' rights, health care, education, and equal access to capital and services for busineses owned by women. Editors said they doubled-checked each factual assertion the candidates made and where necessary corrected their numbers or added a clarifying note ("We Asked, They Answered, You Decide," October).

Besides the analysis of candidates' records and comments noted earlier, *Glamour* ran an editorial that encouraged women to vote and listed a dozen items for them to consider when making their election decisions. In particular, the editorial called attention to the gender gap and how the number of women voting could affect the outcome. Items concerning the gap include reference to a poll which found that men, 58-37, see government as part of the problem while women, 48-44, see it as part of the solution ("A dozen things to ponder on your way to the polls; "You wouldn't even consider not voting, would you?") *Good Housekeeping* provided interviews with both Hillary Clinton and Elizabeth Dole to explore various issues, and *Family Circle* provided a discussion of primary issues as identified in polls.

Ms. presented an "Opinion" by Barbara Findlen, executive editor, that criticized both candidates for supporting The Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as being between a man and a woman and mandates that the federal government not recognize same-sex marriages. She reported that Dole was a cosponsor of the act, which would also allow states to deny recognition of same-sex marriages in other states, and that Clinton had endorsed it. She argued that same-sex marriage should not be regarded as an assault on a valued institution but as a simple question of fairness ("There Goes the Neighborhood," September/October).

Essence ran a signed commentary by Paula Giddings, author of *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*, urging African-Americans to adopt an economic rights agenda based not on a liberal consensus or racial lines but on the basis of mutual economic interests. The commentary might be judged favorable to the Democrats because it is critical of a New Right she said has developed in oppositlon to the social movements of the sixties and seventies, but it doesn't mention the presidential election or the candidates. It talks of identifying and voting for candidates who challenge national and local economic, trade and tax policies that harm the middle and working classes as well as the poor. "Just as civil rights was our challenge in the sixties," she said, "we must make challenging poverty our organizing principle of action and of how we vote in the nineties."

Reports on Voters' Opinions

The Gallup Poll Monthly reported in February, 1996 that in a hypothetical presidential race between Bill Clinton and Bob Dole, voters identified Medicare, the budget deficit and the economy as the principal issues. Crime played only a small role in determining voters' opinions and education and health care played virtually no role in that hypothetical vote. The Gallup organization reported, however, that in a separate Gallup poll, at least in the abstract, voters identified education and crime as top priority issues for the presidential campaign followed closely by the economy and health care. It suggested that education, health care and especially crime could become significant factors in the months ahead even though they seemed to have little influence at the time.[11]

The Gallup Poll Monthly reported in late August that President Clinton continued to enjoy a significant gender gap over Republican nominee Bob Dole. Gallup reported that Clinton's margin over Dole among women had "generally been in the 20-percent plus range all spring and summer, while usually less than half as large among men." It noted that Dole had got the historical convention "bounce" after the Republican convention with both women and men. With men, this drew him fairly close, but with women he remained at least 12 percentage points behind. Gallup reported that in its most recent survey, in late August, Clinton's lead with men was only two points but with women it had climbed back to 22 points. Overall, Clinton led Dole in a two-way match-up by 54 percent to 41 percent.[12]

The Gallup Poll Monthly reported in late October, 1996 that Bill Clinton had developed "respectable to overwhelmingly positive positioning *vis a vis* Bob Dole on the majority of important issues Americans are using to decide their vote in November." The Poll reported that in late October a sample of Americans was given a list of nine issues and asked to identify the most important ones. They chose education, the economy, crime, health care policy, and taxes. In addition, they were asked to say which candidate was doing the best job on the five. Clinton was ranked ahead by margins of 12 (crime) to 31 (education) percentage points on four of the issues. Only on the tax issue, one of Dole's primary issues, were the two candidates essentially tied.[13]

The Gallup Poll Monthly reported in November that it had determined that 10 percent of the voters did not make their final decisions on which presidential candidate to vote for until the 48 hours before the election. This poll, conducted on November 23, found that 6% had changed their minds between the time they were interviewed on Sunday or Monday and the election on Tuesday and 4% had still been undecided on Sunday and Monday. Of those making these late decisions, 31% voted for Dole, 26% for Clinton, 22% for Perot, and the remainder for various other candidates.[14]

Exit poll results on the presidential election confirmed the gender gap that had been identified in polls throughout the year. While men, who made up 48% of the voters, favored Dole by a point, 44% to 43%, women gave Clinton a 54% to 38% margin. Ross Perot got 10% of the male vote and 7% of the female vote, and various other candidates picked up the remainder. It was the largest gap reported since gender gap became part of the political vocabulary in 1980, and it was the first time that one candidate got a plurality of male votes while the other got a plurality of female votes. Clinton was the overwhelming choice of African-Americans, who made up 10 percent of the vote, 84% to 12%, and Hispanics, who made up 5 percent of the vote, 72% to 21%. Clinton was also the choice by varying margins of people in all age groups and by people making less than $75,000 a year. He was preferred by Jewish voters, 78% to 16%, and by Catholic voters, 53% to 37%, while Dole led among Protestant voters, 50% to 43%. Married people favored Dole, 46% to 44%, but those not married favored Clinton, 57% to 31%.[15]

Voters provided additional insights on the election in their exit poll responses to questions about issues. For example, 70% of Clinton supporters as compared with 17% of Dole supporters said the new federal welfare law cuts too much; 69% of Clinton supporters as compared with 21% of Dole supporters said abortion should be legal in all cases; 66% of Clinton supporters as compared with 26% of Dole supporters said their family finances had gotten better since 1992; 78% of Clinton supporters as compared with 17% of Dole suporters said the economy was "excellent"; and 69% of Clinton supporters as compared with 24% of Dole supporters said the country is moving in the right direction.[16]

Clinton supporters identified the top factors in their votes as "vision for the future," 77% as compared with 13% of Dole supporters, and "cares about people," 72% as compared with 17% of Dole supporters. Dole supporters cited "honest/trustworthy" as the most important factor, 84% as compared with 8% of Clinton supporters. Clinton supporters identified the top issues in the vote as education (78% to 16% of Dole supporters), Medicare (67% to 26%), and the economy/jobs (61% to 27%). Dole supporters expressed greater concern about taxes (73% to 19% of Clinton supporters), foreign policy (56% to 35%), the federal deficit (52% to 27%), and crime/drugs (50% to 40%). Also worth noting, 69% of Clinton supporters as compared with 20% of Dole supporters identified "issues" as more important than "character" in the election. Only 24% of Clinton supporters, as compared with 64% of Dole supporters expressed concern about the Clinton scandals.[17]

Election analyses in *The Washington Post* suggested that Clinton had benefited from a huge gender gap, which Clinton's strategy helped create. The analysis noted that the Clinton campaign emphasized issues that women favored more strongly than men such as a v-chip that screens out objectional television shows, a ban on assault weapons, the Violence Against Women Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and tough enforcement of child support laws against deadbeat dads. It noted that working women, who supported Clinton 65% to 26%, had become the bedrock of the Democratic party.[18]

A *New York Times* analysis reported that exit polls show a sharp divide between the sexes on the role of government. It noted that 35% of men as compared with 50% of women think government should do more to solve problems, and 60% of men as compared with 50% of women said government was already doing too many things better left to business and individuals.[19]

An analysis by Danielle Crittenden in *National Review* argued that the gap which led to President Clinton's victory was more of a marriage gap than a gender gap. She suggested that "unmarried women, including single moms, were far more likely to vote for Bill Clinton than married mothers and middle-income women, particularly those "soccer moms" -- married suburban women with kids -- who were supposed to turn out for the President in droves." She said according to ABC News exit polls, the difference among married women was only five points, 48% to 43%. Crittenden said that "the majority of Clinton's female supporters depended in some way on the entitlements most threatened by the Republican Congress, and voted to protect them." She said if Republicans want to close the gender gap they must make it plain, as President Ronald Reagan did, "that the Republican approach to governing is the compassionate, wise, and decent one, while it's the Democrats who line the path to ruin."[20]

California political analyst Maureen Reagan, daughter of the former president, said that Republicans need to tone down their rhetoric, not radically change their policies, to win female voters in the future. Reagan said that Dole could never convince women that he could cut taxes and protect government safety-net programs at the same time. Women don't want things to cost more, she said, but neither do they want to see useful programs eliminated. They want government to make the programs more cost-effective.[21]

Conclusions and Observations

The content analysis and the reports on voters' opinions provide evidence that supports positive responses to all four of the research questions. Qualifications and caveats are, of course, necessary. Many variables can be involved in voter decisions. Without a survey of women voters that asks specifically why did you vote as you did, it's impossible to say for certain whether primed magazine agendas were the deciding factor in their voting for President Clinton. But there is clear evidence to support a claim of magazine involvement and some evidence to support an argument for magazine influence.

First, it is clear from the content analysis that a number of the women's magazines followed through on assertions made in the 1995 survey that reporting and commenting on issues of importance to their readers is an important function of their magazines. *Ladies' Home Journal* did a particularly good job. For six months before the election the magazine worked with the League of Women Voters in an effort to inform readers about election issues most important to women. The coverage was capped by interviews with the candidates about the issues and their personal lives. *Working Woman* provided responses from Clinton and Dole staff members to questions its editors had determined from polling data and talks with readers mattered most to working women. *Glamour* provided an analysis of candidates' records and comments. *Essence* ran commentaries on issues of particular importance to African-American women, and the other magazines ran other helpful information.

Second, the 3-1 ratio of pro-Clinton to pro-Dole articles identified in the content analysis provides support for Bozell's contention that the women's magazines have exerted a liberal influence on their readers. It should be noted, however, that some of the best coverage came in articles judged to be neutral, and the word "liberal" is not always an easy word to define. As Maureen Reagan noted, women would like to cut the cost of government, a conservative hallmark, but they do not want to do it at the expense of programs that have proved valuable to them and their children. Their primary motivations in supporting some programs labeled liberal may be based on a practical self-interest that has little to do with political philosophy.

Third, there is evidence that the women's magazines helped set the election agenda both for the candidates and for their readers. President Clinton, in particular, set out early to develop a strong appeal to women. His staff almost certainly used information in the women's magazines as well as public opinion polls to determine what issues women wanted addressed and how. One study referred to the Democrats' Redbook strategy because they sought to reach women who fit the demographic profile of *Redbook* readers. Some of the articles published by the magazines were based on interviews with the candidates or their staff members. The magazines had an opportunity to get the candidates on record on issues of importance to them. Recognizing the large gender gap, Dole also sought to get support from women by addressing these issues.

Fourth, without a national survey asking specific questions about why women voted as they did, it's difficult to prove a priming effect by the women's magazines. But responses to exit polls and other surveys certainly suggest that women used the candidates' responses to issues primed by the magazines and public opinion polls in making Clinton their choice. They judged both candidates on the basis of their records and their responses on women's issues, and Clinton came out ahead in both categories. Clinton supporters, for example, said "issues" were more important than "character" in the election, and they expressed little concern about the Clinton scandals. Young single women and single moms were far more supportive of Clinton than of Dole, in part perhaps because of the perception that Clinton more so than Dole cares for people. Perhaps, as Danielle Crittenden suggested, they pictured Republicans as a threat to their entitlements and voted for Clinton to protect them.

Certainly, the 1996 presidential election confirmed the fact that women see many issues differently from the way that men see them. President Clinton got this message, developed his campaign acccordingly, and won the election even though he did not achieve a plurality among male voters. One of the sources for this message was the nation's women's magazines, who in keeping with their assertions in 1995, provided information and commentary on issues of importance to women. As Brent Bozell suggested, if the Republicans want to close the gender gap, they had better be aware of the women's magazines in the future.

Notes

1. Brent, Bozell, "The liberal pipeline to soccer moms," Creators Syndicate, Inc. column reprinted in *Conservative Chronicle*, December 11, 1996, p. 21.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Ernest C. Hynds, "Survey Data Indicate Some Magazines Can Help Readers Improve Society, Government by Providing Benchmarks and Forums." Paper presented to the Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at its annual convention in Washington, D.C. in August 1995.

4. Theodore Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century*, 2d ed. (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1964), pp. 448-451.

5. James Playsted Wood, *Magazines in the United States*, 3d ed. (New York: Ronald Press, 1971), pp. 108-110; "Editor's Diary," and "The Power of a Woman," *Ladies' Home Journal*, July 1, 1971, pp. 8, 46, and 152; "Drugs and Our Children," a reprint of a special report in the *Journal* on the Governors Conference on Drugs and Narcotics called by then President Richard Nixon.

6. Ruth Whitney, "MAGAZINES: Society's Leaders or Followers? Glamour and the Changing American Woman," *1993 Meredith Lecture* at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Drake University, April 1993, p. 12.

7. Isabel Wilkerson, "Cease Fire! Can Our Trigger-Happy Country Protect Its Children?", *Family Circle*, March 16, 1994, pp. 84-92; Susan Ungaro, "From the Editor," *Family Circle*, February 1, 1995, p. 12; Bebe Moore Campbell, "coming together," *Family Circle*, February 1, 1995, pp. 68-69.

8. Presstime, July/August, 1996, p.24

9. The media & campaign 96 briefing, No. 1 (Freedom Forum Media Studies Center April 1996), pp. 6-7.

10. Agenda-setting and priming are discussed more fully in several selections in Shanto Iyengar and Richard Reeves, eds., *Do the Media Govern? Politicians, Voters, and Reporters in America* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1997). See especially, "News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and Public Opinion: A Study of Agenda Setting, Priming, and Framing" by Iyengar and Adam Simon and "Anatomy of News Media Priming" by Joanne M. Miller and Jon A. Krosnik.

11. "Most Important Issues in Presidential Campaign: Medicare, Budget," *The Gallup Poll Monthly*, February 1996, p. 9.

12. "Women Continue To Favor Bill Clinton in Large Numbers; Gender Gap Even Bigger for Hillary Clinton," *The Gallup Poll Monthly*, August 1996, p. 21.

13. "Clinton Beats Dole on Most Important Issues," *The Gallup Poll Monthly*, November 1996, p. 7.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

15. "Presidential Election Exit Poll Results," reprinted in Larry J. Sabato, ed., *Toward the Millennium: the Elections of 1996* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997), p. 149. Complete exit poll results can be obtained through *Voter News Service General Election Exit Polls, 1996.* These data are compiled by Voter News Service and made available through the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. Voter News Service is a consortium of ABC

News, CBS News, CNN, Fox News, NBC News and the Associated Press. It obtained questionnaires from 16,627 people at 300 randomly selected precincts on election day.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Thomas B. Edsall and Richard Morin, "Clinton Benefited from Huge Gender Gap," *The Washington Post*, November 6, 1996, p. 7 of election section; Edsall, "Exit Poll Data Tell Tale of Two Constituencies," *The Washington Post*, p. 23.

19. Robin Toner, "Coming Home from the Revolution," *The New York Times*, November 10, 1996, section 4, p. 1.

20. Danielle Crittenden, "What Does Woman Want?", *National Review*, December 9, 1996, pp. 53-54.

21. Mimi Hall, "Women roared, and candidates listened," *USA Today*, November 7, 1996, p. 2A.

Beauty and Fashion Magazine Reading and Anorectic Cognitions As Predictors of Dieting Behavior in College-Age Women

Steven R. Thomsen, Ph.D.
Department of Communication
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah 84602
(801) 378-2078
steven_thomsen@byu.edu

Robert L. Gustafson
Department of Journalism
Ball State University

J. Kelly McCoy, Ph.D.
Department of Family Sciences
Brigham Young University

Marleen Williams, Ph.D.
Counseling Services
Brigham Young University

A paper submitted to the Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, April 1998

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

The study was conducted to explore the relationship between the reading of women's beauty and fashion magazines, dieting behavior, and the existence of anorectic cognitions in college-age women. Unlike past studies, which have examined the relationship between the quantity of beauty and fashion magazines read and eating disorders, this study assesses the impact of reading frequency, preferences for articles, photos, or ads, and motivation for reading on dieting behavior, which is considered to be precursor to the development of eating disorders. Surveys were administered to 540 women enrolled in general studies courses at two universities. Moderate, statistically significant correlations were found between the consumption variables and dieting behaviors as well as the anorectic cognitions measures. Discriminant analysis was used to determine what variables, related to magazine reading and use, body anxiety, weight assessment, and anorectic cognitions (using the Mizes Anorectic Cognition Scale), best predict dieting behavior. Results indicate that of the media consumption variables, frequency of reading, a motivation to read for self improvement, and reading because of a desire to lose weight and look like the models made the largest relative contributions to predicting current dieting behavior.

Introduction

Anorexia nervosa has been characterized as a biopsychosocial disorder resulting in distortions in self-image and self-perception that lead a substantial number of women to develop an intense fear of food and weight gain to the point that many literally starve themselves to death.

Dieting has been identified as a precursor to the development of most eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa (Smolak and Striegel-Moore, 1996; Connors, 1996; Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994). Ironically, dieting has become so commonplace among adolescent and college-age women that researchers who study this behavior often must distinguish between "normative" dieting practices and "maladaptive" dieting and eating (Polivy & Herman, 1987). Estimates are that as many as 40 to 60 percent of all high school girls are on a diet, with indications that significant numbers of pre-adolescent, elementary-age school girls also have now become frequent dieters (Smolak and Striegel-Moore, 1996; American School Health Association, 1989; Rosen & Gross, 1987; Wadden, Brown, Foster, & Linowitz, 1991).

Recent research has identified a number of social, cultural, familial, and biological forces that, when combined with the presence of maladaptive eating practices, can contribute to the pathogenesis of anorexia nervosa, which may affect as many as 4 percent to 22 percent of all college age women (Harrison & Cantor, 1997; Connors, 1996). A growing number of scholars have suggested that the mass media may be an important sociocultural force in the cultivation of unrealistic standards of beauty and the development of eating disorder symptomatology (Levine & Smolak, 1996; Stice, Schupak-Neuberg,

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Shaw & Stein, 1994; Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson & Kelley, 1986; Harrison & Cantor, 1997). The media, it has been argued, inundates women with a steady stream of messages--both visual and editorial--that suggest to be attractive and successful one must be "ultraslender." This emphasis on appearance and attractiveness is believed to lead many women to internalize and unrealistic and unattainable thin "ideal-body stereotype." This, in turn, leads to the development of body size dissatisfaction and, potentially, to eating disorder symptomatology (Myers & Biocca, 1992; Stice, et al., 1994).

Television and magazines, particularly those whose content has been described as "thinness-depicting" and "thinness-promoting," have been identified as having the strongest influence of all media formats in perpetuating unrealistic beliefs about the importance of thinness (Harrison & Cantor, 1997; Stice et al., 1994; Silverstein et al., 1986). Of the two, magazines may have the most powerful effect. In their study of 422 female and male college students, Harrison and Cantor (1997) reported that magazine reading, compared to television viewing, was the most consistent predictor of eating disordered thinking. They found that readership of fitness and beauty magazines, in particular, produced the strongest association with eating disorder symptoms, particularly the "body dissatisfaction" and "drive for thinness."

While a number of recent studies have reported the relationship between media exposure and eating disordered thinking, few have looked specifically at the relationship between media use and dieting. The study explores the relationship between the reading of women's beauty and fashion magazines, dieting behavior, and the existence of anorectic cognitions that might serve as a warning signal that a woman is at risk to develop an eating disorder. Specifically, the study examines the relationship that exists between magazine consumption patterns and dieting behavior, with the specific purpose of determining if the consumption variables can be used to distinguish between dieters and non-dieters. The authors believe that this relationship may be significant in increasing our understanding of the role of the media in the etiology of eating disorders.

Relevant Literature

Because it functions within a broad social and cultural context, the mass media is recognized as one of the strongest mediating influences in the etiology of anorexia nervosa. Much of the research on mass media influences on eating disorder symptomatology has focused on the frequency and nature of messages and images that perpetuate a "thin-ideal" as part of the female gender role. A number of studies using content analysis, for example, have reported that models, actors, and centerfolds have become less "curvaceous" over the past several decades, suggesting that a trend toward a much thinner "ideal" is being presented to women (Garner, Garfinkel, Schwartz & Thompson, 1980; Silverstein, et al., 1986; Czajka-Narins & Parham, 1990).

It is believed that this "thin ideal" is particularly amplified in advertising, fashion and beauty magazines, and television programming where body image and attractiveness are heavily emphasized in message images and content (Myers & Biocca, 1992; Harrison & Cantor, 1997; Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994). Downs and Harrison (1985) noted that 25 percent of network television commercials used "attractiveness-based messages," which they defined as those which make explicit or indirect promises of beauty or thinness as a result of the audience taking the desired action or using the promoted product.

More of this emphasis on attractiveness appears to be directed at women than at men. Silverstein et al. (1986), for example, reported that women in television shows, magazine advertisements, and movies were much more likely to be "thin" than their male counterparts. They also reported that women's magazines were much more likely to run ads for diet food and figure-enhancing products than men's magazines.

Evans, Rutberg, Sather, and Turner (1991) also have argued that magazines have a significant role in the perpetuation of the stereotypical "thin ideal," particularly among teenage readers. Evans et al. suggest that magazines play an important role in adolescent socialization, more specifically, in the development of values and "identity achievement." They analyzed the content a year's worth of issues of Sassy, Seventeen, and Young Miss, three leading magazines, based on 1988 circulation figures, targeted to teenage girls. Articles were coded by content topic: beauty, fashion, entertainment, celebrity, health, and recurrent columns (i.e., horoscope, advice). Advertisements were coded by product or service orientations, which included beauty care and cosmetic use, clothes and fashion accessories, feminine hygiene, education or career advisement services, health (i.e., nutrition and exercise), sundry personal services, and entertainment. They reported that these magazines typically approach the topic of "self improvement" by focusing on fashion dressing and physical beautification. The advertisements, they suggested, also reinforce this pattern:

> Articles and advertisements mutually reinforced an underlying value that the road to happiness is attracting males for successful heterosexual life by way of physical beautification (p. 110).

In their analysis of the content of certain women's magazines, Nemeroff, Stein, Diehl, and Smilack (1994) reported that fashion magazines contained more health and fitness articles than "traditional" and "modern" women's magazines, although "traditional" magazines did show a strong focus on weight loss. While health and fitness and exercise articles appear to be increasing as "weight loss" articles decline, they note that the distinction between the two types of articles has not been methodologically "clean" in other research. Wiseman et al. (1992), for example, have argued that exercise articles could easily be interpreted as weight loss articles in disguise.

The hypothesized link between exposure to magazine content and internalization of the "thin ideal" becomes all the more important given Smith's (1985) findings that anorectics are significantly more media conscious and more influenced by media on body images than non anorectics. When asked to rank the top three institutions that influence their knowledge of an ideal body shape, anorectics ranked media in general first, friends second, and magazines third. The non-anorectics ranked peers first, followed by magazines, and then by general media. Levine and Smolak (1996) also confirm this:

> . . .it is quite common for patients with anorexia nervosa (AN) or bulimia nervosa (BN) to recall that models in fashion magazines have been a source of motivation and guidance in their quest for slenderness and self control. (p. 237-238)

It is generally believed that adolescent women, anorectics in particular, use these media and sociocultural messages to create an internalized "ideal body," and then make it their goal to match this shape. "It is reasonable to imagine," write Myers and Biocca (1992), "that each of these body messages is just one strike of a chisel in sculpting the ideal body image inside a young women's mind (p. 111)."

Several recent studies have attempted to create and map the theoretical links between exposure to images and messages about the "thin ideal" and eating disordered behavior. The goal has been to provide empirical evidence that exposure contributes to anorexia nervosa. Anderson and DiDomenico (1992), for example, have suggested a "dose-response" relationship. They found that greater exposure to thinness promoting media images and content is associated with greater levels of disordered thinking. Harrison and Cantor (1997), as previously mentioned, reported statistically significant relationships between reading fashion magazines and reported "body dissatisfaction" as well as between reading health and fitness magazines and a "drive for thinness," as measured by the Eating Disorder Inventory (EDI). They conclude:

> historical trends, content analyses, and effects studies all suggest that media trends may indeed be linked to the idealization of thinness and, thus, to the development of eating disorders in media consumers.

These findings all support the cognitive model developed by Stice et al. (1994). Stice and his colleagues tested a path-analysis model which postulates that media exposure leads to gender role endorsement and, in turn, to the internalization of a "thin ideal" body stereotype. They found that this internalization had a modest, but significant correlation with the development of "body dissatisfaction." This dissatisfaction occurs as the individual compares her perception of her actual body size with the internalized ideal. As the dissatisfaction mounts, eating disorder symptoms are believed to follow. They, in fact, reported a substantial and statistically significant (.57) correlation between body dissatisfaction and eating disorder symptoms.

Dieting, AN and Media. Smolak and Striegel-Moore (1996) have suggested that dieting serves as the starting point that initiates a number of other maladaptive eating practices that can continue throughout the lifetime of many women. The onset of an eating disorder typically occurs during the period of early adolescence or early adulthood, when these young women are likely to be heavily involved with, and influenced by the mass media and highly susceptible to cultural pressures to be thin (Smolak & Striegel-Moore, 1996; Heatherton, Mahamedi, Striepe, & Field, 1997; Polivy & Herman, 1987; Levine & Smolak, 1996). The effects of that influence can persist for a long time. In their longitudinal study of college-age women dieters, for example, Heatherton, Mahamedi, Striepe, and Field (1997) found that one in five of the women who met the clinical criteria for an eating disorder in college continued to meet that criteria 10 years later.

Polivy and Herman (1987) have argued that the cultural preference for thinness has led to a reconstruction of what constitutes "normal" eating practices. Women whose weight is close to the mean for their age and height are now likely to see themselves as overweight and are likely to engage eating practices that are actually severely restrictive. They argue that, "societally normal eating may not be normal or appropriate by physiological standards. . .and may itself be regarded as disordered or pathological" (p.

635). Noting the role of the media in this reconceptualization of "normal" eating, they continue:

> Society's current preference for slimness has affected eating behavior and attitudes toward food. As this preference has evolved and has become more strongly entrenched, the media has propagated information on how to achieve a slim physique, mainly by means of weight-reducing diets. (p. 636)

The Current Study

This study seeks to investigate the relationship between the consumption of beauty and fashion magazines, dieting, and anorectic cognitions in college-age women. Several key research questions will be explored:

RQ1: Does a relationship exist between frequency of reading, preferences for text, photos, and ads, and dieting behavior?

RQ2: Does a relationship exist between frequency of reading, preferences for text, photos, and ads, and the presence of anorectic cognitions, as measured by the Mizes Anorectic Cognition Scale and its subscales?

RQ3: Which motivations for reading beauty and fashion magazines are most associated with dieting behavior and anorectic thinking?

RQ4: What variables, related to magazine consumption, body anxiety, weight assessment, and anorectic cognitions best predict dieting behavior in college-age women?

Methodology

Data for this study was collected via a multiple-section survey administered to female undergraduate students enrolled in general studies mass communication classes at a mid-sized Midwestern university and in communication and general studies religion classes at a large Western university in the fall of 1997. College-age women have been identified as one of the highest at-risk groups for the development of eating disorders (Conners, 1996).

Variables

In previous research on media use and the development of anorectic and bulimic thinking, magazine "consumption" has been measured by asking subjects to indicate how many issues they read of a particular magazine or category of magazines. This approach to measuring consumption, however, may provide only a limited understanding of how the use of a particular medium affects the cultivation and internalization of particular ideas and beliefs. For this study, we reconstructed "magazine consumption" to include three separate, but related, factors or categories: "frequency," "consumption preferences," and "motivation for reading."

Frequency. In the first section of the survey, a list of eight magazine categories was presented (news and current events, beauty and fashion, entertainment and music, health and fitness, religious, science and nature, literary, and sports). Using a 7-point scale (0 = "never," 1 = "once a year," 2 = "2 to 5 times a year," 3 = "6 to 11 times a year," 4 = "once a month," 5 = "2 to 4 times a month," and 6 = "5 or more times a month"), the respondents were asked to indicate the general frequency with which they read or looked at magazines in each of the categories.

Consumption Preferences. The next section asked respondents specifically about the way in which they "consume" or read beauty and fashion magazines. The purpose was to assess the frequency with which they looked at the pictures or read the articles and advertisements. Using a 5-point scale (0 = "0 percent," 1 = "25 percent," 2 = "50 percent," 3 = "75 percent," 4 = "100 percent") each respondent was asked to indicate the approximate percentage of articles they typically read in an issue, the percentage of photographs they typically look at, and the percentage of advertisements they usually read when they look at beauty and fashion magazines.

Motivation for Reading. The third "consumption" measure was designed to assess the respondents' motivations for reading women's beauty and fashion magazines. The authors, as part of an ongoing project on the role of the media in the etiology of anorexia nervosa, have conducted qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 20 outpatients at an eating disorder treatment facility in a Western state. In the interviews, the authors have probed and explored the way in which these outpatients consumed, and continue to use, beauty and fashion magazines, both before and during their treatment. Using insights obtained from these interviews, the authors developed a 17-item, Likert-type scale to assess reading motivation. The items in that scale, and the results of the factor analysis applied to the scale, are presented and discussed in the results section of this article.

Body Anxiety and Weight Assessment. Body anxiety for this study was measured by listing seven body areas (bust, thighs, buttocks, hips, abdomen, legs and waist) and overall weight, and then asking the respondents to indicate by using a 5-point scale (0 = "never," 1 = "rarely," 2 = "sometimes," 3 = "often," and 4 = "almost always") how anxious, tense or nervous they feel, in general, about that specific body area/part. The final body anxiety score was produced by summing the scores of the eight individual items. This approach was adapted from the Physical Trait Anxiety Scale, a fairly standard and widely-used measure of how an individual feels about specific parts of her appearance. To obtain an overall weight assessment, each respondent was asked to respond to 6-point scale (1 = "underweight," 2 = "just about right," 3 = "less than 5 pounds overweight," 4 = "5 to 10 pounds overweight," 5 = "10 to 15 pounds overweight," 6 = "15 or more pounds overweight") that indicated her perception of her overall body weight. Given that even the most emaciated anorectics claim they feel fat, we were interested only in the respondents' perceptions of their weight, and not the actual weights.

Anorectic Cognitions. The survey instrument included the 33-item Mizes Anorectic Cognitions Scales (MAC). Permission was obtained from its author to use this scale, which assess cognitions relevant to anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. According to its author, the MAC scale assess three areas: rigid weight and eating regulation, weight and eating behavior as the basis of approval from others, and excessive self-control as a component of self-esteem (Mizes, 1990, 1992). Mizes (1990) has reported that high MAC scorers have a greater general emphasis on weight regulation, were more likely than control groups to rate higher various benefits of losing or maintaining weight, use more calorie restriction strategies, and, to a lesser extent, use more strategies to increase real or presumed calorie expenditure.

Dieting Behavior. Finally, each respondent was asked to indicate whether she had dieted "at least once in the past six months" and whether she was currently on a diet.

Results

In all, 540 usable surveys were obtained from the female students at the two universities. The students ranged in age from 18 to 26. The respondents were fairly equally distributed in terms of class standing, with the largest concentrations indicating they were sophomores or juniors. Two respondents indicated they were graduate students. The data was analyzed using the SPSS 6.1 statistical package for Windows 95 systems.

Consumption Measures. As indicated in Table 1, the respondents typically read women's beauty and fashion magazines about once a month (M = 3.828, SD = 1.578). Slightly more than 60 percent of the respondents, in fact, said they read beauty and fashion magazines at least once a month and 16.9 percent read them more than once a week. As indicated by Table 2, beauty and fashion magazines, not surprisingly, are the most frequently read category of magazines by the college-age women in this study, followed closely by news and current events magazines (M = 3.761, SD = 1.601) and entertainment and music magazines (M = 3.352, SD = 1.732). The respondents also indicated that they prefer to look at the photographs (M = 3.335, SD = .933) more than they tend to read the articles (M = 2.234, SD = .986) or the advertisements (M = 2.117, SD = 1.037) (see Table 3).

Insert Table 1 about here

Insert Table 2 about here

Insert Table 3 about here

Table 4 lists the 17 items in the scale developed to assess motivation for reading and presents the results of a principal components factor analysis using a varimax rotation method. The scale, based on interviews with anorectic outpatients, is being developed and tested by the authors. A reliability test for the scale produced a Cronbach's alpha of .83. The analysis produced a five-factor solution. Primary factor loadings are reported for each factor. Factor 1 (Loselbs), measures the degree to which the respondents are motivated to diet and look like the models in the magazines. Factor 2 (Popular) indicates the degree to which the respondents believe that reading beauty and fashion magazines will help them be happier and more popular with family and friends. Factor 3 (Improve) measures the degree to which the respondents use the magazines for self-improvement purposes. Factor 4

(Bored) measures the degree to which respondents read only when they are bored, and Factor 5 (Models) measures the respondent's recognition that the models' appearances do not reflect what is normal for most women.

Insert Table 4 about here

Anorectic Cognitions. The Mizes Anorectic Cognition Scale produces scores that range from 33 to 165. Higher scores indicate a greater presence of anorectic cognitions and a greater potential risk for the development of an eating disorder. In attempts to validate his anorectic cognitions scale, Mizes has reported that the mean score for test groups, whose members were previously diagnosed as having anorexia nervosa according to American Psychological Association DSM-III-R criteria, was 115.6 (SD = 14.7). Control groups, consisting of healthy populations, have produced a baseline mean score of 65.1 (SD = 12.3) (See Table 5).

Insert Table 5 about here

Respondents to our study produced a group mean score of 74.9 (SD = 22.3). Twenty-four respondents (4.4 percent) scored 116 or higher on the MAC, which is consistent with estimates that at least 4 percent of college-age women are likely to suffer from an eating disorder. Table 5 presents the scores for the test group for the total MAC (TotMac) scale as well as the rigid weight and eating regulation (Rigid), weight and eating behavior as the basis of approval from others (Approve), and excessive self control as a component of self-esteem (Control) subscales.[1]

Dieting Behavior. As indicated by Table 6, 47.6 percent of the women surveyed indicated that they had dieted at least once in the past 6 months. Table 7 reports that nearly one in four (22.4 percent) were currently on a diet.

Insert Tables 6 and 7 about here

Relationships Among Key Variables. As anticipated, modest, but statistically significant relationships were found among a number of the beauty and fashion magazine consumption variables, dieting behavior, the anorectic cognition measures, body anxiety, and weight assessment (See Table 8). For example, statistically significant correlations were found for the relationships between beauty and fashion magazine reading frequency (BeautyF) and MAC scores ($r = .24$), current dieting (Dietnow) ($r = .23$), and dieting in the past 6 months (Diet6) ($r = .25$). Not surprisingly, larger correlations were found between the dieting measures and total MAC scores (Diet6 x TotMac, $r = .51$; Dietnow x TotMac, $r = .47$).

Insert Table 8 about here

---

[1] A prinicipal components factor analysis using varimax rotation of our data, however, produced a five factor solution. An SPSS option allowed us to rerun the analysis, forcing a three-factor solution. The three factors produced by this process were nearly identical to Mizes subscales. Reliability tests produced an overall alpha of .93 and alphas above .80 for each of the three subscales. Because of this, we used the subscales identified by Mizes in our analysis.

Of the motivation for reading factors, "Loselbs" and "Popular" produced the largest correlations with dieting behavior (Loselbs x Diet6, r = .41; Loselbs x DietNow, r = .39; Popular x Diet6, r = .27; Popular x DietNow, r = .23) and total MAC scores (Loselbs x TotMac, r = .63; Popular x TotMac, r = .55). "Loselbs" and "Popular" also produced moderate correlations with the three MAC subscales (Loselbs x Approve, r = .45; Loselbs x Control, r = .62; Loselbs x Rigid, r = .59; Popular x Approve, r = .54; Popular x Control, r = .40; Popular x Rigid, r = .51). These two motivation factors produced moderate correlations with body anxiety (Loselbs x Anxiety, r = .48; Popular x Anxiety, r = .37) and overall weight assessment (Loselbs x Assess, r = .30; Popular x Assess, r = .23).

Reading for self improvement (Improve) produced moderate, but smaller correlations with the percentage of ads read (Bfads) (r = .27), percentage of pictures looked at (Bfpix) (r = .27) and articles read (Bftext) (r = .36). Not surprisingly, reading to learn to lose weight and look like the models (Loselbs) also produced moderate correlations with percentages of ads (r = .23) and pictures (r = .29), but not with text. This is consistent with previous research which suggests that readers may be more influenced by the images that perpetuate the thin ideal than the accompanying articles.

Insert Table 9 about here

Discriminant Analysis Results. A stepwise discriminant function analysis was performed using the consumption, weight assessment, body anxiety, and anorectic cognition (MAC and the three subscales) measures and current dieting behavior (Dietnow) as the group or dependent variable. The resulting function (See Table 9) was significant (Wilk's Lambda = .7062, d.f. = 5, p = .0000) and produced a canonical correlation coefficient of .5421. As Table 9 indicates, the function produced by the discriminant analysis retained five variables: the total score on the Mizes Anorectic Cognitions Scale (TotMac), overall weight assessment (Assess), beauty and fashion magazine reading frequency (BeautyF), a desire to lose weight and look like the models in the beauty and fashion magazines (Loselbs), and a belief that reading beauty and fashion magazines will lead to self-improvement (Improve). Table 9 reveals that the total MAC score (.57544), beauty and fashion magazine reading frequency (.39806), and weight assessment (.39593) measures provided the greatest relative contributions to the overall discriminant function. "Improve" was inversely related to the outcome, suggesting that dieters are reading for reasons other than relationship building or for information on fashion and dating trends. Table 10 indicates that the discriminant function correctly classified 77 percent of the respondents. While this was a smaller percentage than we had hoped for, the distance between the group centroids (See Table 9) indicates that the function actually does a good job of discriminating between the groups.

Insert Table 10 about here

Insert Table 11 about here

A second stepwise discriminant function analysis was performed using the consumption, weight assessment, body anxiety, and anorectic cognition (MAC and the three subscales) measures and dieting behavior in the past 6 months (Diet6) as the group or dependent variable. The resulting function (See Table 11) was significant (Wilk's Lambda = .6704, d.f. = 5, p = .0000) and produced a canonical correlation coefficient of .5741.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Again, five variables were retained: the total score on the Mizes Anorectic Cognitions Scale (TotMac), overall weight assessment (Assess), beauty and fashion magazine reading frequency (BeautyF), body trait anxiety (Anxiety), and the MAC Weight and Approval Subscale (Approve). The total MAC score (.77068) and overall weight assessment (.31484) made the greatest relative contributions to this second function, which also correctly classified 77 percent of the respondents (See Table 12). Again, the reported distance between group centroids suggest the function successfully discriminates between dieting behaviors.

Insert Table 12 about here

Discussion

These findings confirm the relationship between beauty and fashion magazine reading, anorectic cognitions and dieting behavior in college-age women. While past research has linked the quantity of reading to eating disordered thinking and behavior, this study finds that the frequency of reading and the motivation for reading may be important factors in these complex relationships. Frequency of reading and several of the motivation factors, particularly a desire to lose weight and look like the models, and a belief that reading will increase happiness and popularity, are positively correlated with the existence of anorectic cognitions, heightened body anxiety, a belief that one is overweight, and dieting. The findings of this study suggest that knowing why a woman reads beauty and fashion magazines, particularly if she is a frequent reader, may be an initial step in understanding the degree to which she is at risk to develop an eating disorder.

In the two discriminant analysis functions produced in this study, frequency of reading made moderate contributions to the prediction of both current and past dieting behavior. Two of the motivation factors, a desire to lose weight and look like the models, and a belief that reading will improve relationships and lead to self-improvement, made moderate contributions to the prediction of current dieting behavior. In both discriminant functions, total MAC scores made the largest contribution to the predictive equation. This suggests that the existence of anorectic thinking and the frequency of reading, motivation factors, body anxiety, and weight assessment all combine to discriminate between dieters and non-dieters. What it cannot explain, however, is whether one or more of these factors predates the existence of the others, or if they are simply comorbid.

So what does this mean? Two possible explanations can be considered here. As has been hypothesized in recent research, readers of these magazines internalize the "thin-ideal" female stereotype that is presented. Dieting, then, may be a manifestation of the effects of this ongoing internalization and the woman's desire to obtain this ideal. The positive relationship between reading frequency and actual dieting is consistent with this model.

A second possibility is that women who are already at risk may be instrumentally using beauty and fashion magazines to find support for their eating disordered thinking by actively seeking out images and information that reinforce the cultivated or internalized "thin-ideal" and that provide them with the motivation to obtain their "goal." The relationship between frequency of reading, motivation factors that include the need to learn about diets, and several of the anorectic cognition measures, particularly a rigid desire to control one's weight and the belief that this control will lead to greater happiness, self-esteem, and social acceptance, is consistent with this explanation and with Levine et al.'s (1994) contention that the uses and gratifications approach may provide a useful theoretical framework for understanding the role of the mass media in the etiology of eating disorders.

Connors (1996) has theorized that eating disorders occur as a result of the convergence of two types of risk factors or experiential domains. One domain of his model suggests that sociocultural factors, physical, and developmental factors lead to a negative body image, a preoccupation with weight, and, ultimately, to "normative discontent" dieting patterns. The introduction of the second set of risk factors increases the dieter's risk of developing more severe eating disorder symptoms. These factors include difficulties with self regulation, psychological impairment, anxiety, low self-esteem, or other affective disorders. In some cases, these are brought on as a result of trauma, temperament/ biological predisposition, or dysfunctional family environments. By suggesting the existence of an interrelationship between media use, dieting behavior and anorectic cognitions as measured by the MAC scale, which assesses difficulties with self-esteem, self-identity, coping behaviors, and unusually high needs for control and acceptance, the results of this study also provide some empirical support for the Conners model.

Future Research. Dieting is a complex set of behaviors. One limitation of this study is that it asked the respondents about dieting only in general terms. As has been suggested, dieting can be viewed as a continuum of behaviors that might be seen as ranging from "normative" practices to more extreme, restrictive behaviors. Future research should explore the link between beauty and fashion magazine consumption and very specific maladaptive dieting practices, such as the use of diuretics, laxatives, fasting, extreme caloric restriction, excessive exercise to burn calories, and vomiting--all behaviors that indicate that the individual has gone beyond "normative discontent" dieting patterns and has embraced behaviors that are more symptomatic of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. This would greatly enhance our understanding of the the connect between reading these types of magazines and gateway behaviors that can lead to eating disorders.

This study's findings that the motivation factors made relatively important contributions to understanding dieting behavior suggests that additional research should be conducted to refine, develop, and validate an instrument capable of assessing the motivations for reading women's beauty and fashion magazines and the potential instrumental uses of these types of publications by both healthy and at-risk readers. Finally, ethnographic research with actual diagnosed anorectic populations might help provide answers to the question of whether media use contributes to the pathogenesis anorectic thinking or if it becomes instrumental only after the onset of other affective, self-regulatory problems.

Bibliography

American School Health Association. Association for the Advancement of Health Education and Society for Public Health Education (1989). The national adolescent student health survey: A report on the health of America's youth. Oakland, CA: Third Party.

Andersen, A. E. & DiDomenico, L. (1992). Diet vs. shape content in popular male and female magazines: A dose response relationship to the incidence of eating disorders? International Journal of Eating Disorders, 11 (3), 283-287.

Connors, M. E. (1996). Development vulnerabilities for eating disorders. In L. Smolak, M. P. Levine, & R. Striegel-Moore (eds.), The Developmental Psychopathology of Eating Disorders: Implications for Research, Prevention, and Treatment (pp. 235-257). Mahwah, NJ.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Crandall, C. S. (1988). Social contagion of binge eating. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 55, 588-598.

Czajka-Narins, D. M. & Parham, E. S. (1990). Fear of fat: Attitudes toward obesity. Nutrition Today, January/February, 26-32.

Downs, A. C. & Harrison, S. K. (1985). Embarrassing age spots or just plain ugly? Physical attractiveness stereotyping as an instrument of sexism on American television commercials. Sex Roles 13 (1/2), 9-19.

Evans, E. D., Rutberg, J., Sather, C., & Turner, C. (1991). Content analysis of contemporary teen magazines for adolescent females. Youth & Society, 23 (1), 99-120.

Garfinkel, P. E. & Garner, D. M. (1982). Anorexia Nervosa: A multidimensional perspective. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Garner, D. M. & Garfinkel, P. E. (1980). Socio-cultural factors in the development of anorexia nervosa. Psychological Medicine, 10, 647-656.

Garner, D. M., Garfinkel, P. E., Schwartz, D., & Thompson, M. (1980). Cultural expectations of thinness in women. Psychological Reports, 47, 483-491.

Garner, D. M., Garfinkel, P. E., Stancer, H. C., & Moldofsky, H. (1976). Body image disturbances in anorexia nervosa and obesity. Psychosomatic Medicine 38 (5), 227-336.

Gordon, R. A. (1988). A sociocultural interpretation of the current epidemic of eating disorders. In B. J. Blinder, B. F. Chaiting, & R. Goldstein (Eds.), The eating disorders (pp. 151-163). Great Neck, N.Y.: PMA.

Harrison, K. & Cantor, J. (1997). The relationship between media consumption and eating disorders. Journal of Communication, 47 (1), 40-67.

Heatherton, T. F., Mahamedi, F., Striepe, M., & Field, A. E. (1997). A 10-year longitudinal study of body weight, dieting, and eating disorder symptoms. Journal of Abnormal Psychology 106 (1), 117-125

Irving, L. M. (1990). Mirror images: Effects of the standard of beauty on the self- and body-esteem of women exhibiting varying levels of bulimic symptoms. Journal of Clinical and Social Psychology 9, 230-242.

Koenig, L. J. & Wasserman, E. L. (1995). Body image and dieting failure in college men and women: Examining links between depression and eating problems. Sex Roles 32 (3/4), 225-249.

Levine, M. P. & Smolak, L. (1996). Media as a context for the development of disordered eating. In L. Smolak, M. P. Levine, & R. Striegel-Moore (eds.), The Developmental Psychopathology of Eating Disorders: Implications for Research, Prevention, and Treatment (pp. 235-257). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Levine, M.P. Smolak, L. & Hayden, H. (1994). The relation of sociocultural factors to eating attitudes and behaviors among middle school girls. Journal of Early Adolescence 14 (4), 471-490.

Martz, D. M., Sturgis, E. T., Gustafson, S. B. (1996). Development and preliminary validation of the cognitive behavioral dieting scale. International Journal of Eating Disorders 19 (3), 297-309.

Mitchell, J. E. & Eckert, E. D. (1987). Scope and significance of eating disorders. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 55 (5), 628-634.

Myers, P. N. & Biocca, F. A. (1992). The elastic body image: The effect of television advertising and programming on body image distortions in young women. Journal of Communication 42 (3), 108-133.

Nemeroff, C. J., Stein, R. I., Diehl, N. S., Smilak, K. M. (1994). From the Cleavers to the Clintons: Role choices and body orientation as reflected in magazine article content. International Journal of Eating Disorders, 16 (2) 167-176.

Parham, E. S., King, S. L., Bedell, M. L., & Martersteck, S. (1986). Weight control content of women's magazines: Bias and accuracy. International Journal of Obesity, 10, 19-27.

Pike, K. M., & Rodin, J. (1991). Mothers, daughters, and disordered eating. Journal of Abnormal Psychology 100, 198-204.

Polivy, J. & Herman, C. P. (1985). Dieting and binging: A causal analysis. American Psychologist 40 (2), 193-201.

Polivy, J. & Herman, C. P. (1987). Diagnosis and treatment of normal eating. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 55 (5), 635-644.

Pyle, R. L., Mitchell, J. E., & Eckert, E. D. (1981). Bulimia: A report of 34 cases. Journal of Clinical Psychiatry 42, 60-64.

Rosen, J, & Gross, J. (1987). Prevalence of weight reducing and weight gaining in adolescent girls and boys. Health Psychology 6, 131-147.

Satter, E. M. (1986). Childhood eating disorders. Journal of the American Dietetic Association 86, 357-361.

Shugar, G. & Krueger, S. (1995). Aggressive family communication, weight gain, and improved family eating attitudes during systemic family therapy for anorexia nervosa. International Journal of Eating Disorders, 17 (1), 23-31.

Silverstein, B., Perdue, L., Peterson, B., & Kelly, E. (1986). The role of the mass media in promoting a thin standard of bodily attractiveness for women. Sex Roles, 14 (9/10), 519-532.

Smith, L. L. (1985, August). Media images and the ideal body shapes: A perspective on women with an emphasis on anorexics. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Memphis, TN.

Smolak, L. & Striegel-Moore, R. (1996). The implications of developmental research for eating disorders. In L. Smolak, M. P. Levine, & R. Striegel-Moore (eds.), The Developmental Psychopathology of Eating Disorders: Implications for Research, Prevention, and Treatment (pp. 235-257). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Spitzack, C. (1990). Confessing excess. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Stice, E. (1994). Review of the evidence for a sociocultural model of bulimia nervosa and an exploration of the mechanisms of action. Clinical Psychology Review 14 (7), 633-661.

Stice, E., Schupak-Neuberg, E., Shaw, H. E., & Stein, R. I. (1994). Relation of media exposure to eating disorder symptomatology: An examination of mediating mechanisms. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 103 (4), 836-840.

Thomas, A. & Chess, S. (1984). Genesis and evolution of behavioral disorders: From infancy to early adult life. The American Journal of Psychiatry 141 (1).

Touyz, S. W., Beumont, P. J., Collins, J. K., & Cowie, I. (1985). Body shape perception in bulimia and anorexia nervosa. International Journal of Eating Disorders 4, 259-265.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Wadden, T., Brown, G., Foster, G., & Linowitz, J. (1991). Salience of weight-related worries in adolescent makes and females. International Journal of Eating Disorders 10, 407-414.

Wiseman, C. V., Gray, J. J., Moismann, J. E., & Ahrens, A. H. (1990). Cultural expectations of thinness in women: An update. International Journal of Eating Disorders, 11 (1), 85-89.

Table 1

Beauty and Fashion Magazine Reading Frequencies

	Value	Frequency	Percent
Never	0	12	2.2
Once a Year	1	33	6.1
2 to 5 Times a Year	2	73	13.5
6 to 11 Times a Year	3	98	18.1
Once a Month	4	117	21.7
2 to 4 Times a Month	5	116	21.5
5 or More Times a Month	6	91	16.9
Total		540	100

Mean = 3.828
SD = 1.578

Mode = 4

Table 2

Total Magazine Reading Frequencies By Category

Category	Mean	SD
Beauty and Fashion	3.828	1.578
News and Current Events	3.761	1.601
Entertainment and Music	3.352	1.732
Religious	2.381	2.129
Health and Fitness	2.146	1.640
Sports and Leisure	1.783	1.660
Science and Nature	.972	1.307
Literary	.939	1.328

Scale:
0 = Never
1 = Once a Year
2 = 2 to 5 Times a Year
3 = 6 to 11 Times a Year
4 = Once a Month
5 = 2 to 4 Times a Month
6 = 5 or More Times a Month

Table 3

Percentages of Text, Photos, and Advertisements Typically Read in Beauty and Fashion Magazines

Category	Mean	SD
Beauty and Fashion Magazines		
Text	2.234	.986
Photographs	3.335	.933
Advertisements	2.117	1.037

Scale:
0 = Never
1 = 25 Percent
2 = 50 Percent
3 = 75 Percent
4 = 100 Percent

Table 4

Factor Analysis
Motivation for Reading Beauty and Fashion Magazines Scale
(a = .83)

Subscale/Question	Primary Factor Loadings 1	2	3	4	5
To diet and look like the models (Loselbs) (a = .74)					
1. I read beauty and fashion magazines to learn about new diet programs I might want to try.	.53				
4. I wish I looked like the models in the fashion and beauty magazines I read.	.77				
5. When I read beauty and fashion magazines, I often imagine that I can look like the models in the photographs and ads.	.67				
11. Reading beauty and fashion magazines motivates me to lose weight.	.63				
To become more popular and happy (Popular) (a = .73)					
6. The models in the photographs have a happy life.		.75			
7. I wish my life was as exciting as the lives of the models in the photographs.		.75			
10. If I could look like the models in the magazines I would be more popular.		.57			
12. Reading beauty and fashion magazines has helped make me more popular among my friends.		.48			
15. My parents would be pleased if I looked more like the models in the ads and photographs in fashion and beauty magazines.		.50			

	Primary Factor Loadings				
Subscale/Question	1	2	3	4	5
For self improvement (Improve) (a = .71)					
2. I read beauty and fashion magazines to help me improve my relationships with the opposite sex.			.72		
3. I read beauty and fashion magazines to learn what the most popular current fashions are.			.52		
8. I read beauty and fashion magazines to learn how I can make myself a more interesting person.			.68		
9. I read beauty and fashion magazines because they lift my spirits and make me feel happy.			.78		
For entertainment/because I am bored (Bored) (a = .48)					
16. I read fashion and beauty magazines just for entertainment or for something to do.				.78	
17. I usually only read fashion and beauty magazines when I'm bored.				.63	
Models aren't like "real" people (Models) (a = .45)					
13. I think the models in the photographs and ads in beauty and fashion magazines are too thin.					.74
14. Most models in fashion and beauty magazines have had their appearance enhanced by cosmetic surgery or other similar medical procedures.					.75

*Questions 13, 14, 16, and 17 are reverse coded.
A 5-point Likert Scale is used (1 = "strongly disagree," 2 = "disagree," 3 = "neither disagree nor agree," 4 = "agree," 5 = "strongly agree").

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 5

Mizes Anorectic Cognitions Scale and Subscales Scores.
Mean Scores for Anorectics, Psychiatric Controls, and Current Subjects

	Anorectics*	Psychiatric Controls*	Current Subjects
TotMac	115.6 (20.5)	65.1 (14.7)	74.9 (22.3)
Rigid	71.3 (9.7)	35.0 (8.7)	42.7 (13.9)
Control	25.8 (2.7)	16.4 (3.5)	18.6 (5.9)
Approve	20.4 (5.8)	18.6 (5.3)	13.5 (4.9)

*Anorectic and Psychiatric Controls scores reported by Mizes (1992). Current subjects are the respondents to this study.

**Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.

Table 6

Dieting Behavior
Have You dieted at least once in the past 6 months?

	Frequency	Percent
No	283	52.4
Yes	257	47.6
Total	540	100

Table 7

Dieting Behavior
Are you currently on a diet?

	Frequency	Percent
No	419	77.6
Yes	121	22.4
Total	540	100

Table 8

Intercorrelations Among Variables for Reading Frequency, Reading Motivation, Reading Preferences, Body Anxiety, Weight Assessment, and MAC Scale Scores

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. BeautyF	—																
2. Bfads	.34*	—															
3. Bfpix	.42*	.49*	—														
4. Bftext	.45*	.28*	.39*	—													
5. Improve	.52*	.27*	.27*	.36*	—												
6. Loselbs	.30*	.23*	.29*	.12***	.48*	—											
7. Popular	.21*	.21*	.20*	.13***	.47*	.58*	—										
8. Bored	.24*	.11***	.02	.13***	.25*	.31*	.25*	—									
9. Models	.06	.01	.01	.02	.09***	.13***	.15**	.18*	—								
10. Anxiety	.13**	.08	.16*	.06	.20*	.48*	.37*	.18*	-.01	—							
11. Assess	.05	.06	.10***	.06	.05	.30*	.23*	.14**	-.02	.64*	—						
12. TotMac	.24*	.15**	.19*	.10***	.33*	.63*	.55*	.30*	.12***	.61*	.40*	—					
13. Approve	.12**	.12***	.06	.06	.27*	.45*	.54*	.27*	.10***	.39*	.23*	.77*	—				
14. Control	.25*	.16*	.24*	.07	.26*	.62*	.40*	.23*	.03	.59*	.39*	.84*	.49*	—			
15. Rigid	.23*	.13***	.17*	.10***	.32*	.59*	.51*	.28*	.15**	.58*	.40*	.97*	.66*	.74*	—		
16. Diet6	.23*	.10**	.16*	.08	.18*	.41*	.27*	.21*	.02	.46*	.40*	.51*	.31*	.49*	.50*	—	
17. Dietnow	.25*	.08***	.13**	.14***	.16*	.39*	.23*	.19*	.04	.39*	.36*	.47*	.31*	.44*	.46*	.56*	—

* p < .0000 ** p < .001 *** p < .05

Table 9

Stepwise Discriminant Analysis of **Current Dieting Behavior** Using Magazine Reading Frequencies, Motivation for Reading, Preference for Text, Photos and Advertisements, Body Anxiety, MAC Scores, and Weight Assessment as Predictor Variables

Function 1

Step	Variable Added	Wilk's Lambda	p	Standardized Coefficient
1	TotMac	.77767	.0000	.57594
2	Assess	.74361	.0000	.39593
3	BeautyF	.72083	.0000	.39806
4	Loselbs	.71503	.0000	.29236
5	Improve	.70616	.0000	- .26227

Function 1
Canonical Correlation = .5421, Wilk's Lambda = .7062. df = 5, p = .0000
Eigenvalue = .4161

Group Centroids

No (0)	-.34706
Yes (1)	1.19446

Table 10

Classification Table

Actual Group Diet Now?	Number of Cases	Predicted Group Membership	
		No	Yes
Group 0 No	415	316 76.1%	99 23.9%
Group 1 Yes	121	24 19.8%	97 80.2%

Percent of "grouped" cases correctly classified: 77.05 %

Table 11

Stepwise Discriminant Analysis of **Dieting Behavior in Past 6 Months** Using Magazine Reading Frequencies, Motivation for Reading, Preference for Text, Photos and Advertisements, Body Anxiety, MAC Scores, and Weight Assessment as Predictor Variables

Function 1

Step	Variable Added	Wilk's Lambda	p	Standardized Coefficient
1	TotMac	.74166	.0000	.77068
2	Assess	.69863	.0000	.31484
3	BeautyF	.68445	.0000	.23804
4	Anxiety	.67538	.0000	.25144
5	Approve	.67043	.0000	- .22591

Function 1
Canonical Correlation = .5741, Wilk's Lambda = .6704, df = 5, p = .0000
Eigenvalue = .4916

Group Centroids

No (0)	-.67024
Yes (1)	.73070

Table 12

Classification Table

Actual Group **Diet in Past 6 Months?**	Number of Cases	Predicted Group Membership	
		No	Yes
Group 0 No	279	221 78.4%	61 21.6%
Group 1 Yes	257	63 24.5%	194 75.5%

Percent of "grouped" cases correctly classified: 76.99 %